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BY THOMAS HARDY.

CHAPTER XXVI.

WINTERBORNE's house had been pulled down. On this account his face had been seen but fitfully in Hintock; and he would probably have disappeared from the place altogether but for his slight business connection with Melbury, on whose premises Giles kept his cider-making apparatus now that he had no place of his own to stow it in. Coming here one evening on his way to a hut beyond the wood, where he now slept, he noticed that the familiar brown-thatched pinion of his paternal roof had vanished from its site, and that the walls were levelled. In present circumstances he had a feeling for the spot that might have been called morbid, and when he had supped in the hut aforesaid he made use of the spare hour before bedtime to return to Little Hintock in the twilight, and ramble over the patch of ground on which he had first seen the day.

He repeated this evening visit on several like occasions. Even in the gloom he could trace where the different rooms had stood; could mark the shape of the kitchen chimney-corner in which he had roasted apples and potatoes in his boyhood, cast his bullets, and burnt his initials on articles that did and did not belong to him. The apple trees still remained to show where the garden had been, the oldest of them even now retaining the crippled

slant to north-east given them by the great November gale of 1824 which carried a brig bodily over the Chesil Bank. They were at present bent to still greater obliquity by the heaviness of their produce. Apples bobbed against his head, and in the grass beneath he crunched scores of them as he walked. There was nobody to gather them now.

It was on the evening under notice that, half sitting, half leaning against one of these inclined trunks, Winterborne had become lost in his thoughts as usual, till one little star after another had taken up a position in the piece of sky which now confronted him where his walls and chimneys had formerly raised their outlines. The house had jutted awkwardly into the road, and the opening caused by its absence was very distinct.

In the silence the trot of horses and the spin of carriage-wheels became audible; the vehicle soon shaped itself against the blank sky, bearing down upon him with the bend in the lane which here occurred, and of which the house had been the cause. He could discern the figure of a woman high up on the driving-seat of a phaeton, a groom being just visible behind. Presently there was a slight scrape, then a scream. Winterborne went across to the spot, and found the phaeton half overturned, its driver sitting on the heap of rubbish which

had once been his dwelling, and the man seizing the horses' heads. The equipage was Mrs. Charmond's, and the unseated charioteer that lady herself.

To his inquiry if she were hurt she made some incoherent reply to the effect that she did not know. The damage in other respects was little or none ; the phaeton was righted, Mrs. Charmond placed in it, and the reins given to the servant. It appeared that she had been deceived by the removal of the house, imagining the gap caused by the demolition to be the opening of the road, so that she turned in upon the ruins instead of at the bend a few yards further on.

"Drive home—drive home!" cried the lady impatiently ; and they started on their way. They had not however gone many paces when, the air being still, Winterborne heard her say, "Stop; tell that man to call the doctor—Mr. Fitzpiers—and send him on to the House. I find I am hurt more seriously than I thought."

Winterborne took the message from the groom and proceeded to the doctor's at once. Having delivered it he stepped back into the darkness, and waited till he had seen Fitzpiers leave the door. He stood for a few minutes looking at the window which, by its light, revealed the room where Grace was sitting ; and went away under the gloomy trees.

Fitzpiers duly arrived at Hintonck House, whose doors he now saw open for the first time. Contrary to his expectation there was visible no sign of that confusion or alarm which a serious accident to the mistress of the abode would have occasioned. He was shown into a room at the top of the staircase, cosily and femininely draped, where by the light of the shaded lamp he saw a woman of full round figure reclining upon a couch in such a position as not to disturb a pile of magnificent hair on the crown of her head. A deep purple dressing-gown formed an admirable foil to the pecu-

liarily rich brown of her hair-plaits ; her left arm, which was naked nearly up to the shoulder, was thrown upwards, and between the fingers of her right hand she held a cigarette, while she idly breathed from her plump lips a thin stream of smoke towards the ceiling.

The doctor's first feeling was a sense of his exaggerated prevision in having brought appliances for a serious case ; the next, something more curious. While the scene and the moment were new to him and unanticipated, the sentiment and essence of the moment were indescribably familiar. What could be the cause of it? Probably a dream.

Mrs. Charmond did not move more than to raise her eyes to him, and he came and stood by her. She glanced up at his face across her brows and forehead, and then he observed a blush creep slowly over her decidedly handsome cheeks. Her eyes, which had lingered upon him with an inquiring conscious expression, were hastily withdrawn, and she mechanically applied the cigarette again to her lips.

For a moment he forgot his errand, till suddenly arousing himself he addressed her, formally condoled with her, and made the usual professional inquiries about what had happened to her, and where she was hurt.

"That's what I want you to tell me," she murmured in tones of indefinable reserve. "I quite believe in you, for I know you are very accomplished, because you study so hard."

"I'll do my best to justify your good opinion," said the young man bowing. "And none the less that I am happy to find the accident has not been serious."

"I am very much shaken," she said.

"Oh yes," he replied ; and completed his examination, which convinced him that there was really nothing the matter with her, and more than ever puzzled him as to why he had been summoned, since she did not appear to be a timid woman. "You must rest

a while ; and I'll send something," he said.

"Oh, I forgot," she returned. "Look here." And she showed him a little scrape on her arm—the full round arm that was exposed. "Put some court-plaster on that, please."

He obeyed. "And now, doctor," she said, "before you go I want to put a question to you. Sit round there in front of me, on that low chair, and bring the candles, or one, to the little table. Do you smoke? Yes? That's right—I am learning. Take one of these; and here's a light." She threw a matchbox across.

Fitzpiers caught it, and having lit up regarded her from his new position which, with the shifting of the candles, for the first time afforded him a full view of her face. "How many years have passed since first we met?" she resumed, in a voice which she vainly endeavoured to maintain at its former pitch of composure, and eying him with daring bashfulness.

"We met, do you say?"

She nodded. "I saw you recently at an hotel in London, when you were passing through, I suppose, with your bride, and I recognised you as one I had met in my girlhood. Do you remember, when you were studying at Heidelberg, an English family that was staying there, who used to walk—"

"And the young lady who wore a long tail of rare-coloured hair—ah, I see it before my eyes!—who lost her gloves on the Great Terrace—who was going back in the dusk to find them—to whom I said 'I'll go for them,' and who answered, 'Oh, they are not worth coming all the way up again for.' I do remember, and how very long we stayed talking there! I went next morning whilst the dew was on the grass: there they lay—the little fingers sticking out damp and thin. I see them now! I picked them up, and then"

"Well?"

"I kissed them," he rejoined rather shamefacedly.

"But you had hardly ever seen me except in the dusk!"

"Never mind. I was young then, and I kissed them. I wondered how I could make the most of my *trouvaillé*, and decided that I would call at your hotel with them that afternoon. It rained, and I waited till next day. I called, and you were gone."

"Yes," answered she with dry melancholy. "My mother, knowing my face was my only fortune, said she had no wish for such a chit as me to go falling in love with an impecunious student, and spirited me away to Baden. As it is all over and past I'll tell you one thing; I should have sent you a line had I known your name. That name I never knew till my maid said as you passed up the hotel stairs a month ago, 'There's Dr. Fitzpiers.'"

"Good heaven," said Fitzpiers musingly. "How the time comes back to me! The evening, the morning, the dew, the spot. When I found that you really were gone it was as if a cold iron had been passed down my back. I went up to where you had stood when I last saw you—I flung myself on the grass, and—being not much more than a boy—my eyes were literally blinded with tears. Nameless, unknown to me as you were, I couldn't forget your voice."

"For how long?"

"Oh—ever so long. Days and days."

"Days and days! Only days and days? Oh the heart of a man! Days and days!"

"But, my dear madam, I had not known you more than a day or two. It was not a full blown love—it was the merest bud—red, fresh, vivid, but small. It was a colossal passion in embryo. It never matured."

"So much the better perhaps."

"Perhaps. But see how powerless is the human will against predestination. We were prevented meeting; we have met. One feature of the case remains the same amid many changes. While you have grown rich, I am still poor. Better than that, you have (judging by

your last remark) outgrown the foolish impulsive passions of your early girlhood. I have not outgrown mine."

"I beg your pardon," said she with vibrations of strong feeling in her words. "I have been placed in a position which hinders such outgrowings. Besides, I don't believe that the genuine subjects of emotion do outgrow them; I believe that the older such people get the worse they are. Possibly at ninety or a hundred they may feel they are cured; but a mere threescore and ten won't do it—at least for me."

He gazed at her in undisguised admiration. Here was a soul of souls!

"Mrs. Charmond, you speak truly," he exclaimed. "But you speak sadly as well. Why is that?"

"I always am sad when I come here," she said, dropping to a low tone with a sense of having been too demonstrative.

"Then may I inquire why you came?"

"A man brought me. Women are always carried about like corks upon the waves of masculine desires . . . I hope I have not alarmed you; but Hintock has the curious effect of bottling up the emotions till one can no longer hold them; I am often obliged to fly away and discharge my sentiments somewhere, or I should die outright."

"There is very good society in the county for those who have the privilege of entering it."

"Perhaps so. But the misery of remote country life is that your neighbours have no toleration for difference of opinion and habit. My neighbours think I am an atheist, except those who think I am a Roman Catholic; and when I speak disrespectfully of the weather or the crops they think I am a blasphemer."

She broke into a low musical laugh at the idea.

"You don't wish me to stay any longer?" he inquired, when he found that she remained musing.

"No—I think not."

"Then tell me that I am to be gone."

"Why? Cannot you go without?"

"I may consult my own feelings only, if left to myself."

"Well if you do, what then? Do you suppose you'll be in my way?"

"I feared it might be so."

"Then fear no more. But good-night. Come to-morrow and see if I am going on right. This renewal of acquaintance touches me. I have already a friendship for you."

"If it depends upon myself it shall last for ever."

"My best hopes that it may. Goodbye."

Fitzpiers went down the stairs absolutely unable to decide whether she had sent for him in the natural alarm which might have followed her mishap, or with the single view of making herself known to him as she had done, for which the capsizé had afforded excellent opportunity. Outside the house he mused over the spot under the light of the stars. It seemed very strange that he should have come there more than once when its inhabitant was absent, and observed the house with a nameless interest; that he should have assumed offhand before he knew Grace that it was here she lived; that, in short, at sundry times and seasons the individuality of Hintock House should have forced itself upon him as appertaining to some existence with which he was concerned.

The intersection of his temporal orbit with Mrs. Charmond's for a day or two in the past had created a sentimental interest in her at the time, but it had been so evanescent that in the ordinary onward roll of affairs he would scarce ever have recalled it again. To find her here, however, in these somewhat romantic circumstances, magnified that bygone and transitory tenderness to indescribable proportions.

On entering Little Hintock he found himself regarding it in a new way—from the Hintock House point of view rather than from his own and

the Melburys'. The household had all gone to bed. As he went up stairs he heard the snore of the timber-merchant from his quarter of the building, and turned into the passage communicating with his own rooms in a strange access of sadness. A light was burning for him in the chamber; but Grace, though in bed, was not asleep. In a moment her sympathetic voice came from behind the curtains.

"Edgar, is she very seriously hurt?"

Fitzpiers had so entirely lost sight of Mrs. Charmond as a patient that he was not on the instant ready with a reply.

"Oh, no," he said. "There are no bones broken, but she is shaken. I am going again to-morrow."

Another inquiry or two, and Grace said—

"Did she ask for me?"

"Well—I think she did—I don't quite remember; but I am under the impression that she spoke of you."

"Cannot you recollect at all what she said?"

"I cannot, just this minute."

"At any rate she did not talk much about me?" said Grace with disappointment.

"Oh, no."

"But you did, perhaps," she added, innocently fishing for a compliment.

"Oh, yes—you may depend upon that!" replied he warmly, though scarcely thinking of what he was saying, so vividly was there present to his mind the personality of Mrs. Charmond.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE doctor's professional visit to Hintock House was promptly repeated the next day and the next. He always found Mrs. Charmond reclining on a sofa, and behaving generally as became a patient who was in no great hurry to lose that title. On each occasion he looked gravely at the little scratch on her arm, as if it had been a serious wound.

He had also, to his further satisfac-

tion, found a slight scar on her temple, and it was very convenient to put a piece of black plaster on this conspicuous part of her person in preference to gold-beater's skin, so that it might catch the eyes of the servants, and make his presence appear decidedly necessary, in case there should be any doubt of the fact.

"Oh—you hurt me!" she exclaimed one day.

He was pealing off the bit of plaster on her arm, under which the scrape had turned the colour of an unripe blackberry previous to vanishing altogether. "Wait a moment, then—I'll damp it," said Fitzpiers. He put his lips to the place and kept them there till the plaster came off easily. "It was at your request I put it on," said he.

"I know it," she replied. "Is that blue vein still in my temple that used to show there? The scar must be just upon it. If the cut had been a little deeper it would have spilt my hot blood indeed!" Fitzpiers examined so closely that his breath touched her tenderly, at which their eyes rose to an encounter—hers showing themselves as deep and mysterious as interstellar space. She turned her face away suddenly. "Ah! none of that! none of that—I cannot coquet with you!" she cried. "Don't suppose I consent to for one moment. Our poor, brief, youthful hour of love-making was too long ago to bear continuing now. It is as well that we should understand each other on that point before we go further."

"Coquet! Nor I with you. As it was when I found the historic gloves, so it is now. I might have been and may be foolish; but I am no trifler. I naturally cannot forget that little space in which I flitted across the field of your vision in those days of the past, and the recollection opens up all sorts of imaginings."

"Suppose my mother had not taken me away!" she murmured, her dreamy eyes resting on the swaying tip of a distant tree.

"I should have seen you again."

"And then?"

"Then the fire would have burnt higher and higher. What would have immediately followed I know not; but sorrow and sickness of heart at last."

"Why?"

"Well—that's the end of all love, according to Nature's law. I can give no other reason."

"Oh, don't speak like that," she exclaimed. "Since we are only picturing the possibilities of that time, don't for pity's sake spoil the picture." Her voice sank almost to a whisper as she added, with an incipient pout upon her full lips, "Let me think at least that if you had really loved me at all seriously, you would have loved me for ever and ever!"

"You are right—think it with all your heart," said he. "It is a pleasant thought, and costs nothing."

She weighed that remark in silence a while. "Did you ever hear anything of me from then till now?" she inquired.

"Not a word."

"So much the better. I had to fight the battle of life as well as you. I may tell you about it some day. But don't ever ask me to do it, and particularly do not press me to tell you now."

Thus the two or three days that they had spent in tender acquaintance on the romantic slopes above the Neckar were stretched out in retrospect to the length and importance of years; made to form a canvas for infinite fancies, idle dreams, luxurious melancholies, and pretty, alluring assertions which could neither be proved nor disproved. Grace was never mentioned between them, but a rumour of his proposed domestic changes somehow reached Mrs. Charmond's ears.

"Doctor, you are going away," she exclaimed, confronting him with accusatory reproach in her large dark eyes no less than in her cooing voice. "Oh yes, you are," she went on, springing to her feet with an air which might almost have been called passionate. "It is no use denying it!

You have bought a practice at Budmouth. I don't blame you. Nobody can live at Hintock—least of all a professional man who wants to keep abreast of recent discovery. And there is nobody here to induce such a one to stay for other reasons. That's right, that's right—go away!"

"But no, I have not actually bought the practice as yet, though I am indeed in treaty for it. And, my dear friend, if I continue to feel about the business as I feel at this moment—perhaps I may conclude never to go at all."

"But you hate Hintock, and everybody and everything in it that you don't mean to take away with you?"

Fitzpiers contradicted this idea in his most vibratory tones, and she lapsed into the frivolous archness under which she hid passions of no mean strength—strange, smouldering, erratic passions, kept down like a stifled conflagration, but bursting out now here, now there—the only certain element in their direction being its unexpectedness. If one word could have expressed her it would have been Inconsequence. She was a woman of perversities, delighting in piquant contrasts. She liked mystery, in her life, in her love, in her history. To be fair to her, there was nothing in these which she had any great reason to be ashamed of, and many things of which she might have been proud; but her past had never been fathomed by the honest minds of Hintock, and she rarely volunteered her experiences. As for her capricious nature the people on her estates grew accustomed to it, and with that marvellous subtlety of contrivance in steering round odd tempers that is found in sons of the soil and dependents generally, they managed to get along under her government rather better than they would have done beneath a more equitable rule.

Now, with regard to the doctor's notion of leaving Hintock, he had advanced further towards completing the purchase of the Budmouth surgeon's goodwill than he had admitted to

Mrs. Charmond. The whole matter hung upon what he might do in the ensuing twenty-four hours. The evening after leaving her he went out into the lane, and walked and pondered between the high hedges, now greenish-white with wild clematis—here called “old-man’s-beard” from its aspect later in the year.

The letter of acceptance was to be written that night, after which his departure from Hintock would be irrevocable. But could he go away, remembering what had just passed? The trees, the hills, the leaves, the grass—each had been endowed and quickened with a subtle charm since he had discovered the person and history and, above all, the mood of their owner. There was every temporal reason for leaving: it would be entering again into a world which he had only quitted in a passion for isolation, induced by a fit of Achillean moodiness after an imagined slight. His wife herself saw the awkwardness of their position here, and cheerfully welcomed the purposed change, towards which every step had been taken but the last. But could he find it in his heart—as he found it clearly enough in his conscience—to go away?

He drew a troubled breath, and went indoors. Here he rapidly penned a letter, wherein he withdrew, once for all, from the treaty for the Budmouth practice. As the postman had already left Little Hintock for that night he sent one of Melbury’s men to intercept a mail-cart on another turnpike-road, and so got the letter off.

The man returned, met Fitzpiers in the lane, and told him the thing was done. Fitzpiers went back to his house musing. Why had he carried out this impulse—taken such wild trouble to effect a probable injury to his own and his young wife’s prospects? His motive was fantastic, glowing, shapeless as the fiery scenery about the western sky. Mrs. Charmond could overtly be nothing more to him than a patient now, and to his

wife, at the outside, a patron. In the unattached bachelor days of his first sojourn here how highly proper an emotional reason for lingering on would have appeared to troublesome dubiousness. Matrimonial ambition is such an honourable thing.

“My father has told me that you have sent off one of the men with a late letter to Budmouth,” cried Grace, coming out vivaciously to meet him under the declining light of the sky, wherein hung, solitary, the folding star. “I said at once that you had finally agreed to pay the premium they ask, and that the tedious question had been settled. When do we go, Edgar?”

“I have changed my mind,” said he. “They want too much—seven hundred and fifty is too large a sum,—and in short I have declined to go further. We must wait for another opportunity. I fear I am not a good business-man.” He spoke the last words with a momentary faltering at the great foolishness of his act; and as he looked in her fair and honourable face his heart reproached him for what he had done.

Her manner that evening showed her disappointment. Personally she liked the home of her childhood much, and she was not ambitious. But her husband had seemed so dissatisfied with the circumstances hereabout since their marriage that she had sincerely hoped to go for his sake.

It was two or three days before he visited Mrs. Charmond again. The morning had been windy, and little showers had sowed themselves like grain against the walls and windowpanes of the Hintock cottages. He went on foot across the wilder recesses of the park, where slimy streams of fresh moisture, exuding from decayed holes caused by old amputations, ran down the bark of the oaks and elms, the rind below being coated with a lichenous wash as green as emerald. They were stout-trunked trees, that never rocked their stems in the fiercest gale, responding to it entirely by crook-

ing their limbs. Wrinkled like an old crone's face, and antlered with dead branches that rose above the foliage of their summits, they were nevertheless still green—though yellow had invaded the leaves of other trees.

She was in a little boudoir or writing-room on the first floor, and Fitzpiers was much surprised to find that the window-curtains were closed and a red-shaded lamp and candles burning, though out-of-doors it was broad daylight. Moreover a large fire was burning in the grate, though it was not cold.

"What does it all mean?" he asked.

She sat in an easy chair, her face being turned away. "Oh," she murmured, "it is because the world is so dreary outside. Sorrow and bitterness in the sky, and floods of agonised tears beating against the panes. I lay awake last night, and I could hear the scrape of snails creeping up the window glass; it was so sad! My eyes were so heavy this morning that I could have wept my life away. I cannot bear you to see my face; I keep it away from you purposely. Oh! why were we given hungry hearts and wild desires if we have to live in a world like this? Why should Death alone lend what Life is compelled to borrow—rest? Answer that, Dr. Fitzpiers."

"You must eat of a second tree of knowledge before *you* can do it, Felice Charmond."

"Then, when my emotions have exhausted themselves, I become full of fears, till I think I shall die for very fear. The terrible insistencies of society—how severe they are, and cold, and inexorable—ghastly towards those who are made of wax and not of stone. Oh, I am afraid of them; a stab for this error, and a stab for that—correctives and regulations framed that society may tend to perfection—an end which I don't care for in the least. Yet for this all I do care for has to be stunted and starved."

Fitzpiers had seated himself near her. "What sets you in this mourn-

ful mood?" he asked gently. In reality he thought that it was the result of a loss of tone from staying indoors so much, but he did not say so.

"My reflections. Doctor you must not come here any more. They begin to think it a farce already. I say you must come no more. There—don't be angry with me;" and she jumped up, pressed his hand and looked anxiously at him. "It is necessary. It is best for both you and me."

"But," said Fitzpiers, gloomily, "what have we done?"

"Done—we have done nothing. Perhaps we have thought the more. However, it is all vexation. I am going away to Middleton Abbey, near Shottsford, where a relative of my late husband lives, who is confined to her bed. The engagement was made in London, and I can't get out of it. Perhaps it is for the best that I go there till all this is past. When are you going to enter on your new practice, and leave Hintock behind for ever, with your pretty wife on your arm?"

"I have refused the opportunity. I love this place too well to depart."

"You *have*?" she said, regarding him with wild uncertainty. "Why do you ruin yourself in that way? Great heaven, what have I done!"

"Nothing. Besides you are going away."

"Oh yes; but only to Middleton Abbey for a month or two. Yet perhaps I shall gain strength there—particularly strength of mind—I require it. And when I come back I shall be a new woman; and you can come and see me safely then, and bring your wife with you, and we'll be friends—she and I. Oh, how this shutting up of one's self does lead to indulgence in idle sentiments. I shall not wish you to give your attendance to me after to-day. But I am glad that you are not going away—if your remaining does not injure your prospects at all."

As soon as he had left the room the mild friendliness she had pre-

served in her tone at parting, the playful sadness with which she had conversed with him, equally departed from her. She became as heavy as lead—just as she had been before he arrived. Her whole being seemed to dissolve in a sad powerlessness to do anything, and the sense of it made her lips tremulous and her closed eyes wet. His footsteps again startled her, and she turned round.

"I return for a moment to tell you that the evening is going to be fine. The sun is shining; so do open your curtains and put out those lights. Shall I do it for you?"

"Please—if you don't mind."

He drew back the window-curtains, whereupon the red glow of the lamp and the two candle-flames became almost invisible under the flood of late autumn sunlight that poured in. "Shall I come round to you?" he asked, her back being towards him.

"No," she replied.

"Why not?"

"Because I am crying, and I don't want to see you."

He stood a moment irresolute, and regretted that he had killed the rosy passionate lamplight by opening the curtains and letting in garish day.

"Then I am going," he said.

"Very well," she answered, stretching one hand round to him, and patting her eyes with a handkerchief held in the other.

"Shall I write a line to you at——?"

"No, no." A gentle reasonableness came into her tone as she added, "It must not be, you know. It won't do."

"Very well. Good-bye." The next moment he was gone.

In the evening with listless adroitness she encouraged the maid who dressed her for dinner to speak of Dr. Fitzpiers's marriage.

"Mrs. Fitzpiers was once supposed to favour Mr. Winterborne," said the young woman.

"And why didn't she marry him?" said Mrs. Charmond.

"Because you see, ma'am, he lost his houses."

"Lost his houses? How came he to do that?"

"The houses were held on lives, and the lives dropped, and your agent wouldn't renew them, though it is said that Mr. Winterborne had a very good claim. That's as I've heard it, ma'am, and it was through it that the match was broke off."

Being just then distracted by a dozen emotions, Mrs. Charmond sank into a mood of dismal self-reproach. "In refusing that poor man his reasonable request," she said to herself, "I fore-doomed my rejuvenated girlhood's romance. Who would have thought such a business matter could have nettled my own heart like this! Now for a winter of regrets and agonies and useless wishes, till I forget him in the spring. Oh! I am glad I am going away."

She left her chamber, and went down to dine with a sigh. On the stairs she stood opposite the large window for a moment, and looked out upon the lawn. It was not yet quite dark. Half-way up the steep green slope confronting her stood old Timothy Tangs, who was shortening his way homeward by clambering here where there was no road, and in opposition to express orders that no path was to be made there. Tangs had momentarily stopped to take a pinch of snuff; but observing Mrs. Charmond gazing at him he hastened to get over the top out of hail. His precipitancy made him miss his footing, and he rolled like a barrel to the bottom, his snuff-box rolling in front of him.

Her indefinite idle impossible passion for Fitzpiers; her constitutional cloud of misery, the sorrowful drops that still hung upon her eyelashes, all made way for the impulse started by the spectacle. She burst into an immoderate fit of laughter; her very gloom of the previous hour seeming to render it the more uncontrollable. It had not died out of her when she reached the dining-room; and even here, before the servants,

her shoulders suddenly shook as the scene returned upon her; and the tears of her risibility mingled with the remnants of those engendered by her grief.

She resolved to be sad no more. She drank two glasses of champagne, and a little more still after those; and amused herself in the evening with singing little ariatory songs.

"I must do something for that poor man Winterborne, however," she said.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

A WEEK had passed, and Mrs. Charmond had left Hintock House. Middleton Abbey, the place of her sojourn, was about twenty miles distant by road, eighteen by bridle-paths and footways.

Grace observed, for the first time, that her husband was restless, that at moments he even was disposed to avoid her. The scrupulous civility of mere acquaintanceship crept into his manner; yet, when sitting at meals, he seemed hardly to hear her remarks. Her little doings interested him no longer, whilst towards her father his bearing was not far from supercilious. It was plain that his mind was entirely outside her life, whereabouts outside it she could not tell; in some region of science possibly, or of psychological literature. But her hope that he was again immersing himself in those lucubrations which before her marriage had made his light a landmark in Hintock, was founded simply on the slender fact that he often sat up late.

One evening she discovered him leaning over a gate on Rub-Down Hill, the gate at which Winterborne had once been standing, and which opened on the brink of a declivity, slanting down directly into Blackmore Vale, or the Vale of White Hart, extending beneath the eye at this point to a distance of many miles. His attention was fixed on the landscape far away, and Grace's approach

was so noiseless that he did not hear her. When she came close she could see his lips moving unconsciously, as to some impassioned visionary theme.

She spoke, and Fitzpiers started. "What are you looking at?" she asked.

"Oh! I was contemplating our old place of Buckbury, in my idle way," he said.

It had seemed to her that he was looking much to the right of that cradle and tomb of his ancestral dignity; but she made no further observation, and taking his arm walked home beside him almost in silence. She did not know that Middleton Abbey lay in the direction of his gaze. "Are you going to have out Darling this afternoon?" she asked presently. Darling, the light-grey mare which Winterborne had bought for Grace, Fitzpiers now constantly used, the animal having turned out a wonderful bargain in combining a perfect docility with an almost human intelligence; moreover, she was not too young. Fitzpiers was unfamiliar with horses, and he valued these qualities.

"Yes," he replied, "but not to drive. I am riding her. I practise crossing a horse as often as I can now, for I find that I can take much shorter cuts on horseback."

He had, in fact, taken these riding exercises for about a week, only since Mrs. Charmond's absence; his universal practice hitherto having been to drive.

Some few days later, Fitzpiers started on the back of this horse to see a patient in the aforesaid Vale. It was about five o'clock in the evening when he went away, and at bedtime he had not reached home. There was nothing very singular in this, though she was not aware that he had any patient more than five or six miles distant in that direction. The clock had struck one before Fitzpiers entered the house, and he came to his room softly, as if anxious not to disturb her.

The next morning she was stirring considerably earlier than he.

In the yard there was a conversation going on about the mare; the man who attended to the horses, Darling included, insisted that the latter was "hag-rid"; for when he had arrived at the stable that morning, she was in such a state as no horse could be in by honest riding. It was true that the doctor had stabled her himself when he got home, so that she was not looked after as she would have been if the speaker had groomed and fed her; but that did not account for the appearance she presented, if Mr. Fitzpiers's journey had been only where he had stated. The phenomenal exhaustion of Darling, as thus related, was sufficient to develop a whole series of tales about equestrian witches and demons, the narration of which occupied a considerable time.

Grace returned indoors. In passing through the outer room she picked up her husband's overcoat which he had carelessly flung down across a chair. A turnpike ticket fell out of the breast-pocket, and she saw that it had been issued at Middleton Gate. He had therefore visited Middleton the previous night, a distance of at least five-and-thirty miles on horseback, there and back.

During the day she made some inquiries, and learnt for the first time that Mrs. Charmond was staying at Middleton Abbey. She could not resist an inference—strange as that inference was.

A few days later he prepared to start again, at the same time and in the same direction. She knew that the state of the cottager who lived that way was a mere pretext; she was quite sure he was going to Mrs. Charmond. Grace was amazed at the mildness of the anger which the suspicion engendered in her. She was but little excited, and her jealousy was languid even to death. It told tales of the nature of her affection for him. In truth, her ante-nuptial regard for Fitzpiers had been rather of the

quality of awe towards a superior being than of tender solicitude for a lover. It had been based upon mystery and strangeness—the mystery of his past, of his knowledge, of his professional skill, of his beliefs. When this structure of ideals was demolished by the intimacy of common life, and she found him as merely human as the Hintock people themselves, a new foundation was in demand for an enduring and staunch affection—a sympathetic inter-dependence, wherein mutual weaknesses are made the grounds of a defensive alliance. Fitzpiers had furnished none of that single-minded confidence and truth out of which alone such a second union could spring; hence it was with a controllable emotion that she now watched the mare brought round.

"I'll walk with you to the hill if you are not in a great hurry," she said, rather loth, after all, to let him go.

"Do; there's plenty of time," replied her husband. Accordingly he led along the horse, and walked beside her, impatient enough nevertheless. Thus they proceeded to the turnpike road, and ascended Rub-Down Hill to the gate he had been leaning over when she surprised him ten days before. This was the end of her excursion. Fitzpiers bade her adieu with affection, even with tenderness, and she observed that he looked weary-eyed.

"Why do you go to-night?" she said. "You have been called up two nights in succession already."

"I must go," he answered, almost gloomily. "Don't wait up for me." With these words he mounted his horse, passed through the gate which Grace held open for him, and ambled down the steep bridle-track to the valley.

She closed the gate and watched his descent, and then his journey onward. His way was east, the evening sun which stood behind her back beaming full upon him as soon as he got out from the shade of the hill. Notwithstand-

ing this untoward proceeding she was determined to be loyal if he proved true; and the determination to love one's best will carry a heart a long way towards making that best an ever-growing thing. The conspicuous coat of the active though blanching mare made horse and rider easy objects for the vision. Though Darling had been chosen with such pains by Winterborne for Grace, she had never ridden the sleek creature; but her husband had found the animal exceedingly convenient, particularly now that he had taken to the saddle, plenty of staying power being left in Darling yet. Fitzpiers, like others of his character, while despising Melbury and his station, did not at all disdain to spend Melbury's money, or appropriate to his own use the horse which belonged to Melbury's daughter.

And so the infatuated young surgeon went along through the gorgeous autumn landscape of White Hart Vale, surrounded by orchards lustrous with the reds of apple-crops, berries, and foliage, the whole intensified by the gilding of the declining sun. The earth this year had been prodigally bountiful, and now was the supreme moment of her bounty. In the poorest spots the hedges were bowed with haws and blackberries; acorns cracked underfoot, and the burst husks of chestnuts lay exposing their auburn contents as if arranged by anxious sellers in a fruit-market. In all this proud show some kernels were unsound as her own situation, and she wondered if there were one world in the universe where the fruit had no worm, and marriage no sorrow.

Her Tannhäuser still moved on, his plodding steed rendering him distinctly visible yet. Could she have heard Fitzpiers's voice at that moment she would have found it murmuring,

"—Towards the lode-star of my one desire
I flitted, even as a dizzy moth in the owl-light."

But he was a silent spectacle to her now. Soon he rose out of the valley,

and skirted a high plateau of the chalk formation on his right, which rested abruptly upon the fruity district of deep loam, the character and herbage of the two formations being so distinct that the calcareous upland appeared but as a deposit of a few years' antiquity upon the level vale. He kept along the edge of this high, uninclosed country, and the sky behind him being deep violet she could still see white Darling in relief upon it—a mere speck now—a Wouvermans eccentricity reduced to microscopic dimensions. Upon this high ground he gradually disappeared.

Thus she had beheld the pet animal purchased for her own use, in pure love of her, by one who had always been true, impressed to convey her husband away from her to the side of a new-found idol. While she was musing on the vicissitudes of horses and wives, she discerned shapes moving up the valley towards her, quite near at hand, though till now hidden by the hedges. Surely they were Giles Winterborne, with his two horses and cider-apparatus, conducted by Robert Creedle. Up, upward they crept, a stray beam of the sun alighting every now and then like a star on the blades of the pomace-shovels, which had been converted to steel mirrors by the action of the malic acid. She opened the gate when he came close, and the panting horses rested as they achieved the ascent.

"How do you do, Giles?" said she, under a sudden impulse to be familiar with him.

He replied with much more reserve. "You are going for a walk, Mrs. Fitzpiers?" he added. "It is pleasant just now."

"No, I am returning," said she.

The vehicles passed through, the gate slammed, and Winterborne walked by her side in the rear of the apple-mill.

He looked and smelt like Autumn's very brother, his face being sunburnt to wheat-colour, his eyes blue as corn-flowers, his sleeves and leggings dyed

with fruit stains, his hands clammy with the sweet juice of apples, his hat sprinkled with pips, and everywhere about him that atmosphere of cider which at its first return each season has such an indescribable fascination for those who have been born and bred among the orchards. Her heart rose from its late sadness like a released spring ; her senses revelled in the sudden lapse back to nature unadorned. The consciousness of having to be genteel because of her husband's profession, the veneer of artificiality which she had acquired at the fashionable schools, were thrown off, and she became the crude country girl of her latent earliest instincts.

Nature was bountiful, she thought. No sooner had she been starved off by Edgar Fitzpiers than another being, impersonating bare and undiluted manliness, had arisen out of the earth ready to hand. This was an excursion of the imagination which she did not encourage, and she said suddenly, to disguise the confused regard which had followed her thoughts, "Did you meet my husband?"

Winterborne, with some hesitation : "Yes."

"Where did you meet him?"

"At Calfhay Cross. I come from Middleton Abbey ; I have been making there for the last week."

"Haven't they a mill of their own?"

"Yes, but it's out of repair."

"I think—I heard that Mrs. Charmond had gone there to stay?"

"Yes, I have seen her at the windows once or twice."

Grace waited an interval before she went on, "Did Mr. Fitzpiers take the way to Middleton?"

"Yes . . . I met him on Darling." As she did not reply, he added with a gentler inflection, "You know why the mare was called that?"

"Oh yes—of course," she answered quickly.

They had risen so far over the crest of the hill that the whole west sky was revealed. Between the broken clouds they could see far into the

recesses of heaven, the eye journeying on under a species of golden arcades, and past fiery obstructions, fancied cairns, logan-stones, stalactites and stalagmite of topaz. Deeper than this their gaze passed thin flakes of incandescence, till it plunged into a bottomless medium of soft green fire.

Her abandonment to the luscious time after her sense of ill-use, her revolt for the nonce against social law, her passionate desire for primitive life, may have showed in her face. Winterborne was looking at her, his eyes lingering on a flower that she wore in her bosom. Almost with the abstraction of a somnambulist he stretched out his hand and gently caressed the flower.

She drew back. "What are you doing, Giles Winterborne!" she exclaimed, with a look of severe surprise. The evident absence of all premeditation from the act, however, speedily led her to think that it was not necessary to stand upon her dignity here and now. "You must bear in mind, Giles," she said kindly, "that we are not as we were ; and some people might have said that what you did was taking a liberty."

It was more than she need have told him ; his action of forgetfulness had made him so angry with himself that he flushed through his tan. "I don't know what I am coming to!" he exclaimed savagely. "Ah—I was not once like this!" Tears of vexation were in his eyes.

"No, now—it was nothing. I was too reproachful."

"It would not have occurred to me if I had not seen something like it done elsewhere—at Middleton lately," he said thoughtfully after a while.

"By whom?"

"Don't ask it."

She scanned him narrowly. "I know quite well enough," she returned indifferently. "It was by my husband, and the woman was Mrs. Charmond. Association of ideas reminded you when you saw me. . . . Giles—tell me all you know about that—please do,

Giles! But no—I won't hear it. Let the subject cease. And as you are my friend say nothing to my father."

They reached a place where their ways divided. Winterborne continued along the highway which kept outside the copse, and Grace opened a gate that entered it.

CHAPTER XXIX.

SHE walked up the soft grassy ride, screened on either hand by nut-bushes just now heavy with clusters of twos and threes and fours. A little way on the track she pursued was crossed by a similar one at right angles. Here Grace stopped; some few yards up the transverse ride the buxom Suke Damson was visible—her gown tucked up high through her pocket hole, and no bonnet on her head—in the act of pulling down boughs from which she was gathering and eating nuts with great rapidity, her lover Tim Tangs standing near her engaged in the same pleasant meal.

Crack, crack, went Suke's jaws every second or two. By an automatic chain of thought Grace's mind reverted to the tooth-drawing scene described by her husband; and for the first time she wondered if that narrative were really true, Susan's jaws being so obviously sound and strong. Grace turned up towards the nut-gatherers, and conquered her reluctance to speak to the girl, who was a little in advance of Tim. "Good evening, Susan," she said.

"Good evening, Miss Melbury," (crack).

"Mrs. Fitzpiers."

"Oh yes, ma'am—Mrs. Fitzpiers," said Suke with a peculiar curtsey.

Grace, not to be daunted, continued, "Take care of your teeth, Suke. That accounts for the toothache."

"I don't know what an ache is, either in tooth, ear, or head, thank the Lord," (crack).

"Nor the loss of one, either?"

"See for yourself, ma'am." She parted her red lips, and exhibited the

whole double row, full up and unimpaired.

"You have never had one drawn?"

"Never."

"So much the better for your stomach," said Mrs. Fitzpiers in an altered voice. And turning away quickly she went on.

As her husband's character thus shaped itself under the touch of time, Grace was almost startled to find how little she suffered from that jealous excitement which is conventionally attributed to all wives in such circumstances. But though possessed by none of the feline wildness which it was her moral duty to experience, she did not fail to know that she had made a frightful mistake in her marriage. Acquiescence in her father's wishes had been degradation to herself. People are not given premonitions for nothing; she should have obeyed her impulse on that early morning and steadfastly refused her hand.

Oh, that plausible tale which her then betrothed had told her about Suke—the dramatic account of her entreaties to him to draw the aching enemy, and the fine artistic touch he had given to the story by explaining that it was a lovely molar without a flaw!

She traced the remainder of the woodland track dazed by the complications of her position. If his protestations to her before their marriage could be believed, her husband had felt affection of some sort for herself and this woman simultaneously; and was now again spreading the same emotion over Mrs. Charmond and herself conjointly, his manner being still kind and fond at times. But surely, rather than that, he must have played the hypocrite towards her in each case with elaborate completeness; and the thought of this sickened her, for it involved the conjecture that if he had not loved her his only motive for making her his wife must have been her little fortune. Yet here Grace made a mistake, for the love of men like Fitzpiers is unquestionably of

such quality as to bear division and transference. He had indeed once declared, though not to her, that on one occasion he had noticed himself to be possessed by five distinct infatuations at the same time. Therein his differed from the highest affection as the lower orders of the animal world differ from advanced organisms, partition causing not death but a multiplied existence. He had loved her sincerely, and had by no means ceased to love her now. But such double and treble-barrelled hearts were naturally beyond her conception.

Of poor Suke Damson Grace thought no more. She had had her day.

"If he does not love me I will not love him!" said Grace proudly. And though these were mere words, it was a somewhat formidable thing for Fitzpiers that her heart was approximating to a state in which it might be possible to carry them out. That very absence of hot jealousy which made his courses so easy, and on which, indeed, he congratulated himself, meant, unknown to either wife or husband, more mischief than the inconvenient watchfulness of a jaundiced eye.

Her sleep that night was nervous. The wing allotted to her and her husband had never seemed so lonely. At last she got up, put on her dressing-gown, and went down stairs. Her father, who slept lightly, heard her descend, and came to the stair-head.

"Is that you, Grace? What's the matter?" he said.

"Nothing more than that I am restless. Edgar is detained by a case at Owlscombe in White Hart Vale."

"But, how's that? I saw the woman's husband at Great Hintock just afore bed-time; and she was going on well, and the doctor gone then."

"Then he's detained somewhere else," said Grace. "Never mind me; he will soon be home. I expect him about one."

She went back to her room, and dozed and woke several times. One

o'clock had been the hour of his return on the last occasion; but it had passed now by a long way, and still Fitzpiers did not come. Just before dawn she heard the men stirring in the yard; and the flashes of their lanterns spread every now and then through her window-blind. She remembered that her father had told her not to be disturbed if she noticed them, as they would be rising early to send off four loads of hurdles to a distant sheep-fair. Peeping out she saw them bustling about, the hollow-turner among the rest; he was loading his wares—wooden-bowls, dishes, spigots, spoons, cheese-yats, funnels and so on—upon one of her father's waggons, who carried them to the fair for him every year out of neighbourly kindness.

The scene and the occasion would have enlivened her but that her husband was still absent; though it was now five o'clock. She could hardly suppose him, whatever his infatuation, to have prolonged to a later hour than ten an ostensibly professional call on Mrs. Charmond at Middleton; and he could have ridden home in two hours and a half. What then had become of him? That he had been out the greater part of the two preceding nights added to her uneasiness.

She dressed herself, descended, and went out, the weird twilight of advancing day chilling the rays from the lanterns, and making the men's faces wan. As soon as Melbury saw her he came round, showing his alarm.

"Edgar is not come," she said. "And I have reason to know that he's not attending anybody. He has had no rest for two nights before this. I was going to the top of the hill to look for him."

"I'll come with you," said Melbury.

She begged him not to hinder himself; but he insisted, for he saw a peculiar and rigid gloom in her face over and above her uneasiness, and did not like the look of it. Telling the men he would be with them again soon he walked beside her into the turn-

pike-road, and partly up the hill whence she had watched Fitzpiers the night before across the Great White Hart or Blackmore Valley. They halted beneath a half-dead oak, hollow, and disfigured with white tumours, its roots spreading out like claws grasping the ground. A chilly wind circled round them, upon whose currents the seeds of a neighbouring lime-tree, supported parachute-wise by the wing attached, flew out of the boughs downward like fledglings from their nest. The vale was wrapped in a dim atmosphere of unnaturalness, and the east was like a livid curtain edged with pink. There was no sign nor sound of Fitzpiers.

"It is no use standing here," said her father. "He may come home fifty ways . . . why, look here—here be Darling's tracks—turned homeward and nearly blown dry and hard! He must have come in hours ago without your seeing him."

"He has not done that," said she.

They went back hastily. On entering their own gates they perceived that the men had left the waggons, and were standing round the door of the stable which had been appropriated to the doctor's use. "Is there anything the matter?" cried Grace.

"Oh, no, ma'am. All's well that ends well," said old Timothy Tangs. "I've heard of such things before—amongst workfolk, though not amongst your gentlepeople—that's true."

They entered the stable, and saw the pale shape of Darling standing in the middle of her stall, with Fitzpiers on her back, sound asleep. Darling was munching hay as well as she could with the bit in her mouth, and the reins, which had fallen from Fitzpiers's hand, hung upon her neck.

Grace went and touched his hand; shook it, before she could arouse him. He moved, started, opened his eyes, and exclaimed, "Ah, Felice! . . . Oh, it's Grace. I could not see in the gloom. What—am I in the saddle!"

"Yes," said she. "How do you come here?"

He collected his thoughts, and in a few minutes stammered: "I was riding along homeward through the Vale, very, very sleepy, having been up so much of late. When I came opposite Holywell spring the mare turned her head that way as if she wanted to drink. I let her go in, and she drank; I thought she would never finish. While she was drinking the clock of Owlscombe Church struck twelve. I distinctly remember counting the strokes. From that moment I positively recollect nothing till I saw you here by my side."

"The name! If it had been any other horse he'd have had a broken neck!" murmured Melbury.

"'Tis wonderful, sure, how a quiet hoss will bring a man home at such times!" said John Upjohn. "And, what's more wonderful than keeping your seat in a deep slumbering sleep. I've knowed men drowze off walking home from randies where the mead and other liquors have gone round well, and keep walking for more than a mile on end without waking. Well, doctor, I don't care who the man is, 'tis a mercy you wasn't a drowned, or a splintered, or a hanged up to a tree like Absalom—also a handsome gentleman like yerself, as the prophets say."

"True," murmured old Timothy piously, "from the sole of his boots to the crown of his hat there was no blemish in him!"

"Or leastwise you might ha' been a-wownded into tatters a'most, and no brother-tradesman to jine your few limbs together within seven mile!"

Whilst this grim address was proceeding Fitzpiers had dismounted, and taking Grace's arm walked stiffly indoors with her. Melbury stood staring at the horse which, in addition to being very weary, was spattered with mud. There was no mud to speak of about the Hintocks just now—only in the clammy hollows of the Vale beyond Owlscombe, the stiff soil of which retained moisture for weeks after the uplands were dry. Whilst they were

rubbing down the mare Melbury's mind coupled with the foreign quality of the mud the name he had heard unconsciously muttered by the surgeon when Grace took his hand—"Felice." Who was Felice? Why, Mrs. Charmond; and she, as he knew, was staying at Middleton.

Melbury had indeed pounced upon the image that filled Fitzpiers's half-awakened soul—wherein there had been a picture of a recent interview on a lawn with a capriciously-passionate woman, who had begged him not to come again in tones whose modulations incited him to disobey. "What are you doing here? Why do you pursue me? Another belongs to you. If they were to see you they would seize you as a thief!" And she had turbulently admitted to his wringing questions that her visit to Middleton had been undertaken less because of the invalid relative than in shame-faced fear of her own weakness if she remained near his home. A triumph then it was to Fitzpiers, poor and hampered as he had become, to recognise his real conquest of this beauty, delayed so many years. His was the selfish passion of Congreve's Millamant, to whom love's supreme delight lay in seeing "that heart which others bleed for, bleed for me."

When the horse had been attended to Melbury stood uneasily here and there about his premises; he was rudely disturbed in the comfortable views which had lately possessed him on his domestic concerns. It is true that he had for some days discerned that Grace more and more sought his company, preferred supervising his kitchen and bake-house with her stepmother to occupying herself with the lighter details of her own apartments. She seemed no longer able to find in her own hearth an adequate focus for her life, and hence, like a weak queen-bee after leading off to an independent home, had hovered again into the parent hive. But he had not construed these and other incidents of the kind till now.

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Something was wrong in the dove-cote. A ghastly sense beset him that he alone would be responsible for whatever unhappiness should be brought upon her for whom he almost solely lived; whom to retain under his roof he had faced the numerous inconveniences involved in giving up the best part of his house to Fitzpiers. There was no room for doubt that, had he allowed events to take their natural course, she would have accepted Winterborne, and realised his old dream of restitution to that young man's family.

That Fitzpiers could allow himself to look for a moment on any other creature than Grace filled Melbury with grief and astonishment. In the pure and simple life he had led it had scarcely occurred to him that after marriage y man might be faithless. That he could sweep to the heights of Mrs. Charmond's position, lift the veil of Isis, so to speak, would have amazed Melbury by its audacity if he had not suspected encouragement from that quarter. What could he and his simple Grace do to countervail the passions of such as those two sophisticated beings—versed in the world's ways, armed with every apparatus for victory? In such an encounter the homely timber-dealer felt as inferior as a savage with his bow and arrows before the precise weapons of modern warfare.

Grace came out of the house as the morning drew on. The village was silent, most of the folk having gone to the fair. Fitzpiers had retired to bed, and was sleeping off his fatigue. She went to the stable and looked at poor Darling: in all probability Giles Winterborne, by obtaining for her a horse of such intelligence and docility, had been the means of saving her husband's life. She paused over the strange thought; and then there appeared her father behind her. She saw that he knew things were not as they ought to be, from the troubled dulness of his eye, and from his face, different points of which had independent

motions, twitchings, and tremblings, unknown to himself, and involuntary.

"He was detained, I suppose, last night?" said Melbury.

"Oh, yes; a bad case in the Vale," she replied calmly.

"Nevertheless he should have stayed at home."

"But he couldn't, father."

Her father turned away. He could hardly bear to see his whilom truthful girl brought to the humiliation of having to talk like that.

That night carking care sat beside Melbury's pillow, and his stiff limbs tossed at its presence. "I can't lie here any longer," he muttered; striking a light he wandered about the room. "What have I done, what have I done for her?" he said to his wife who had anxiously awakened. "I had long planned that she should marry the son of the man I wanted to make amends to; do ye mind how I told you all about it, Lucy, the night before she came home? Ah! but I was not content with doing right, I wanted to do more!"

"Don't raft yourself without good need, George," she replied. "I won't

quite believe that things are so much amiss. I won't believe that Mrs. Charmond has encouraged him. Even supposing she has encouraged a great many, she can have no motive to do it now. What so likely as that she is not yet quite well, and doesn't care to let another doctor come near her?"

He did not heed. "Grace used to be so busy every day, with fixing a curtain here and driving a tin-tack there; but she cares for no employment now!"

"Do you know anything of Mrs. Charmond's past history? Perhaps that would throw some light upon things. Before she came here as the wife of old Charmond four or five years ago, not a soul seems to have heard aught of her. Why not make inquiries? And then do ye wait and see more; there'll be plenty of opportunity. Time enough to cry when you know 'tis a crying matter; 'tis bad to meet troubles half-way."

There was some good sense in the notion of seeing further. Melbury resolved to inquire and wait, hoping still, but oppressed between whiles with much fear.

(*To be continued.*)

ALLAN RAMSAY.

Two hundred years ago, in October, 1686, Allan Ramsay was born in the upland village of Leadhills ; and one hundred years ago last July, the first edition of Burns's poems made its appearance in the weaving-town of Kilmarnock. For the greater part of the century prior to the latter event Ramsay was universally regarded as the national poet of Scotland, and 'The Gentle Shepherd' was believed to be the most consummate flower of Scottish poetical genius ; for just a century since, and in virtue of that latter event, his name and fame have suffered more or less partial eclipse. He has not been forgotten,—his reputation was too firmly rooted in the popular heart for that ; but he has been undeservedly neglected ; his poetical power has been growing more and more traditional, and is now, we fear, very largely taken on trust. His name, we have said, has not been forgotten—it is, indeed, a household word throughout the Scottish Lowlands. There, and more especially in the rural parts of that district, they talk familiarly, in the Scottish manner, of Allan ; "that's ane o' Allan's sangs" they will say. But if they speak of Allan Cunningham, who was also in his way successful in touching the national heart, they never fail to give him his full name. Ramsay has a prescriptive right to the simple and unsupported *prenomen*. Sometimes they vary the expression by prefixing honest ; "honest Allan!" they will say in the excess of a proud familiarity with his name. And then they will most likely follow up the words by a quotation, said to be from Burns, which probably reveals the origin of the adjective :

"Yes! there is ane—a Scottish callan ;
There's ane—come forrit, honest Allan !
Thou needna jouk behint the hallan,
A chiel sae clever ;
The teeth o' time may gnaw Tantallan,
But thou's for ever !"

Yet it may well be doubted whether they appreciate at its proper value the epithet which they repeat so glibly. Ramsay was not unduly bold ; but bashfulness was no feature of his disposition, and he was the last person of the men of his day to be found "jouking behint the hallan."¹ If Burns did not write the lines, and it is only Burns's brother Gilbert who denies the authorship, somebody else of Burns's day did, who saw and lamented the neglect into which Ramsay was falling as the brighter orb of Burns's genius rose on the literary horizon. If Burns did write them, a supposition to which we decidedly incline, they are in his mouth a singularly graceful acknowledgment of the excellence of his first and best model and master, and at the same time express or imply a sentiment which is quite in harmony with the frequent and just confessions of his indebtedness to Ramsay. Ramsay's name marks an epoch in the history of Scottish poetry. Before him were "the Makkaris," who reached their lofty culmination in William Dunbar, and who may be said to have terminated in some obscurity in the Sempills. The era of modern Scottish poetry began with Ramsay. His is the style, the treatment of a subject, the language, which, with modifications and developments of a perfectly natural and organic growth, Fergusson, and Burns, and Scott (in those of his novels which describe purely Scottish character), and all the many minor writers of distinctively Scottish literature, Hogg being the most notable exception, have since adopted and used. But though he began a new era, he was not altogether independent of the old. He links on, at the outstart of his literary career, to the middle Sempill, whose humorous elegy on the death of

¹ *I.e.* Ducking behind the door.

the Piper of Kilbarchan was the standard of his imitation, as it had previously been that of his contemporary and correspondent, Hamilton of Gilbertfield. Not less sympathetic was his sense of humour with the comic vein of the royal poet, James the First, as exemplified in 'Christ's Kirk on the Green,' and his two cantos of continuation to that famous poem are an acknowledgment of the inspiration which he drew from the ancient "Makkaris." He was, however, essentially original. Cowper was not more original, excepting only in the matter of language. The poets of Scotland have from time to time employed a conventional and artificial phraseology; but no age, and scarcely a writer in the long line of their history, has been quite deficient in the use of a vigorous vernacular, sufficient to bring them into living touch with the men of their generation. Ramsay's originality did not, therefore, chiefly show itself in his adoption of the current and conversational speech of his day. It is, however, to be noticed that by the voluminousness of his poems and their immense popularity, continued without a break for three generations, he may be said to have fixed the standard of modern Scotch, by blending his mother-tongue with antique expressions of the past, and proving the capability of the mixture for large and varied poetical representation. "Thy bonnie auld words gar (make) me smile," was part of a complimentary epistle addressed to Ramsay by a contemporary, himself an adept in the use of Scotch and considerably older than the person whom he was addressing. The fact would seem to be, that modern Scotch is very much what Ramsay made it; and we question if there are many expressions in the rural Scotch of to-day, with all Burns's cultivation of the language, which Ramsay, if he were living now, would not readily recognise.

But it is not in the humour of his delineations that Ramsay is really most original. The humour, though

in one sense it was his own, that is, unaffectedly sincere and genuine as a personal possession, was, notwithstanding, what one might almost call a national property, in which such of the elder poets as Dunbar and Lyndsay, and such of their successors as Fergusson and Burns, could claim at least an equal share. Yet it may well be allowed that he deepened and widened the national sense of humour by the use which he made of his own share, and turned it with greater emphasis and effect upon the follies and minor immoralities of social life than any had ever done before him. He set the example of humorous portraiture and address to Burns; and even in that dangerous, though legitimate, field for satirical humour, which since Lyndsay's time has been the exclusive walk of Burns, namely, religious bigotry and hypocrisy, he was meditating entrance and onslaught at the age of seventy—too late an age! Hear his own words:—

"I have it even in my poo'er
The very Kirk itself to scour,
An' that ye'll say 's a brag richt bauld!
But did not Lyndsay this o' auld?
Wha gave the scarlet harlot strokes
Sneller¹ than all the pefts of Knox."

Ramsay's originality lies much in the unromantic and yet fascinating realism of his natural descriptions. He brings no lime-light effects to bear upon his scenery; neither does he present us with mere photographic copies. It is Nature, her naked self, but never presented except when in perfect harmony with the lyrical mood to which she is accessory, or the dramatic situation to which she is subordinated. It is very much the nature to which Cowper introduces us, allowance being made for difference of locality—healthy, every-day, commonplace nature; only, we think, more vividly, more completely and harmoniously presented. A brief quotation or two will in a general way exemplify what we mean. "This

¹ Keener.

sunny morning," says the Gentle Shepherd,

"This sunny morning, Roger, cheers my blood,
And puts all Nature in a jovial mood.
How heartsome is't to see the rising plants,
And hear the birds chirr owre their pleasure rants!"

The description of Habbie's How (Hollow) is another case in point—

"Gae farer up the burn to Habbie's How
Where a' the sweets of Spring and Summer grow.
Between twa barks, out o'er a little linn,
The water fa's and maks a singand din;
A pool breast-deep, beneath as clear as glass,
Kisses with easy whirls the bordering grass;
We'll end our washing while the morning's cool,
And, when the day grows het, we'll to the pool,
There wash ousrels—'tis healthfu' now in May,
And sweetly cauler on sae warm a day."

It is, however, in his delineation of human nature that Ramsay is most genuine; but he is less so in his earlier and somewhat exaggerated descriptions of low life, than in his later and cheerfully serious representations of commonplace rural character. The pastoral drama of 'The Gentle Shepherd' is not only a masterpiece, but an original creation. There was nothing like it, nothing to suggest it, in all the antecedent literature of Scotland. It is to this day the poem that most successfully represents Scottish rural life. The 'Farmer's Ingle' of Fergusson and Burns's 'Cotter's Saturday Night' are kindred poems, similar in subject, and approached with the same serious spirit. But the form is different; they are narrative poems, each descriptive of a common phase of rustic life within doors. None the less are they pendants to 'The Gentle Shepherd'; for 'The Gentle Shepherd' is less a rustic drama in which the interest depends on the plot, than a rustic idyll, the form of which happens to be dramatic, with the interest dependent on the author's views of rustic human life. It is to the credit of

Ramsay that, living in close and actual contact with the artificial school of poets of whom Pope and Gay were the representatives of his acquaintance, and rather welcoming than seeking to withdraw himself from their influence, he had yet within himself an instinct of true poetic feeling and a power of true poetic art, sufficient to lift him above their blandishments, and to anticipate by half a century that return to nature which in England was inaugurated by Cowper and finally consummated by Wordsworth.

Nor should it ever be forgotten that Ramsay was, in fact, the first in point of time of Scottish song-writers. He may be called the inventor of that species of song which is regarded as distinctively Scottish. Burns's songs have in much more abundant measure the true lyrical quality, the inspiration and the utterance, but they are of identically the same species as Ramsay's. To the green and but half-opened buds of Ramsay they offer the contrast of the full-blown blossoms of June, gorgeous with dyes and breathing a paradise of fragrance, but they are yet the development of those buds, grown on the same stem and drawing nourishment from the same soil. Much was to be expected from a country which had already given the rich promise of 'Polwarth on the Green,' 'Lochaber no more,' 'The last time I came o'er the Muir,' and a really charming love-song beginning somewhat coldly with the question, "Now wat ye wha I met yestreen?" They were the genuine forerunners of 'Bonnie Jean,' 'The gloomy Night is gath'ring fast,' and even of 'Highland Mary.'

There are some authors, and even authors of note, of whose private life it may be said, without any necessary implication of a stain upon their character, that the less one knows of it the better. They seem to have lived two individual and separate lives, the one social (or it may have been unsocial) and the other literary, between

which there was no vital bond of union. You will search the one in vain for key or commentary to the other. This was not so with Ramsay. His domestic life was in everyday contact with his literary life, supplying it with theme, feeling, illustration, and language. His literary life, in short, was, as far as it went, the expression of his domestic life ; it was even more autobiographical than that of Burns. His, therefore, is a case where some acquaintance with the man is of service to a due appreciation of the poet.

It was fortunate for the development of his poetical faculty that his early years were spent without a break in the isolation and comparative solitude of upland rural life. Here he was, in the absence of other and less healthy attractions, in a sense compelled to make familiar acquaintance with the realism of Nature and the ways of the pastoral world. What he then learned he could never afterwards forget ; and there can be little doubt that it was upon his recollection of the scenes and characters of his native district that he drew in the composition of 'The Gentle Shepherd.' His education was sufficiently liberal to include the Latin Grammar, and to enable the young student to make out the meaning of Horace, and even catch an occasional glimpse of the beauty of his style. In middle age he revived those early studies, and gave as the result some half-dozen versions of Horace in Lowland Scotch, which retain the sentiment and reproduce much of the pithy expression of the original.

" Then fling on coals, and ripe the ribs,¹
And beek² the house baith but and ben ;
And mutchkin stoup³ it hads but dribs,
Then let's get in the tappit hen."⁴

This is really an admirable paraphrase, as a glance at the text will show :

¹ Stir the fire.

² Warm.

³ A small measure.

⁴ Large measure.

Dissolve frigus, ligna super foco
Large reponens, atque benignius
Deprome quadrimum Sabina,
O Thaliarche, merum diota.

And not less happily turned are the lines :

Nec dulces amores
Sperne, puer, neque tu choreas,
Donec virenti canities abest
Morosa.

" Be sure ye dinna quat the grip
Of ilka joy when ye are young,
Before auld age your vitals nip
And lay ye twafald o'er a rung." ⁵

Ramsay was kept at school till he was fifteen, and received what one may call, for a boy of his place in life, an excellent education. For this advantage he was indebted to his step-father, a Mr. Crichton, who seems to have owned a small piece of ground, upon which he lived and maintained a large family, in the neighbourhood of Leadhills. Ramsay's mother had been early left a widow ; and, as the commencement of his life in the country was marked by his father's death, so the conclusion of it was probably determined by the death of his mother. At the age of fifteen, some time in the first year of last century, Allan Ramsay, an orphan, friendless and penniless, and dependent upon his own exertions for his livelihood, looked out upon the world in which he was yet to be both famous and wealthy, from the window of a wig-maker's shop in Edinburgh.

Ramsay was well connected, at least on his father's side. He claimed kindred with the Chief of the Ramsays, Ramsay of Dalhousie, and, as Goldsmith puts it, " had his claims allowed" by the Earl. There is little doubt that there were influential members of his grandfather's family in Edinburgh when he first went to live there ; but as he remained throughout the whole course of his life independent of any of them, it is unnecessary to trace his connection with people to whom he owed so little. But it is necessary to correct one or two popular errors

⁵ A staff for old age.

concerning his first business. In the first place Ramsay was not a barber. It is very probable that in the early part of the eighteenth century the tonsorial art was a branch of surgery; but this at least is certain, that it had no connection as a craft with the calling of a wig-maker. Nor was Ramsay's life-long occupation as a burgess of Edinburgh that to which he had served an apprenticeship. It is true that he was a wig-maker when he began to be famous, but from the time of his established reputation as a new Scotch poet, that is some time between 1720 and 1726, he gradually took up the trade of a bookseller, and wig-making went to the wall. He was a bookseller, and a most enterprising one, for considerably over a quarter of a century; it was as a bookseller and book-lender he made a fortune; and it is with the trade of a dealer in books we should properly associate his name. Though he thus left wig-making, he was too sensible a man to despise it, or any other lawful occupation. He speaks jocularly of being a "thatcher of skulls," and—referring to his double business of wig-making and bookselling, which he carried on for a few years simultaneously—he describes himself as thatching the outside and lining the inside of "many a douce and witty pass (head)." In one of his rhyming epistles, indeed, he declares he was "bred but howe (humbly) enough to a mean trade." But he was in easy circumstances when he thus wrote retrospectively, and his correspondent was no less exalted a personage than the Secretary of the Admiralty, whose views of wig-making were no doubt as Ramsay sympathetically described them. His reasons for abandoning the occupation to which he was bred for the calling of a bookseller were perfectly satisfactory; he found the latter to be more congenial to his tastes, more lucrative, and less laborious. Wig-making, however, procured him the double advantage of a wife and patronage. His first patrons

were naturally his customers, necessarily men of professional or at least genteel rank; and his wife, Christian, was the daughter of one of them, a legal practitioner in the town, of the name of Ross.

His marriage with this lady, who was considerably his superior in social rank, was the beginning of a long and happy union. It was celebrated during the New Year festivities of 1712. From that year good fortune, with scarcely one interval of absence, waited on his footsteps. It was about that time he first began to write verses in emulation of Hamilton, and it was in that same year he was admitted into a very select social coterie of twelve, self-styled the Easy Club, and numbering among its members a university professor, a doctor in large practice, and the well-known scholar and printer, Thomas Ruddiman. His connection with this club was of the utmost importance in drawing out and directing his poetical talent. He became its laureate, entertained its gatherings with his compositions, profited by its criticisms, and acquired something of its professional culture. It was for the Easy Club he wrote his humorous descriptions of low life, such as the elegy on the death of Maggie Johnston, a suburban ale-wife well known to all Edinburgh. This was really his first poem, his earlier pieces being merely the essays of an apprentice learning the art of literary expression. It was much applauded, and encouraged him to renewed efforts which were still more successful. The companion elegy on the death of Lucky Wood, the cleanly ale-wife of the Canongate, and his additions to the ancient poem of 'Christ's Kirk on the Green,' mark his highest achievements as a humorist in the department of low life. His situations in these compositions are intensely comical, and the language that depicts them is correspondingly blunt and broad. Coarse, indeed, they are, but their coarseness is neither morbid nor prurient. It is the natural

healthy coarseness of Chaucer. Hogarth found in Ramsay a brother artist, and in token of his delight at the discovery, dedicated to him the twelve plates of his illustrations of '*Hudibras*.' But after his thirty-sixth year most of this coarseness disappears, and the result is a style of composition not less effective and much more refined, and more distinctly on the side of virtue. Ramsay however, it should be noticed, claimed in his earlier compositions the credit of a moralist, and attributed to the spiritual purblindness of his critics their failure to perceive the satire of his representations.

The members of the Easy Club were suspected of sympathy with Jacobitism, and the suspicion becoming warm, the club broke up in some alarm. Ramsay steered pretty clear of politics, but there is good ground for believing that his political leanings were towards the exiled Stuarts. The famous Countess of Eglinton, who accepted the dedication of '*The Gentle Shepherd*,' was no politically indiscriminate patroness of literature; and there can be no doubt that community of political sentiment would be a recommendation, if not a requisite, to the friendship of Pope, Gay, and Arbuthnot—a friendship which Ramsay enjoyed. On the dissolution of the club, which occurred shortly after the fiasco of '*The Fifteen*,' Ramsay resolved on an appeal to the public for confirmation of his claim to rank as a poet. He went about the matter with characteristic prudence. Specimens of his poetry were printed on broad sheets and circulated about the town by street-vendors, for the purpose of testing or stimulating the popular taste. The plan succeeded so well that it became a practice of the citizens' wives to send out for '*Allan Ramsay's last piece*,' and discuss it with their afternoon tea. He next opened a subscription list for purchasers' names, and finally a handsome quarto of four hundred pages made its appearance from the press of his friend Ruddiman, and was speedily taken up. An analysis of the subscription list

shows, to the credit of the Scottish nobility, that about one-seventh of his patrons were of aristocratic birth. It is pleasant to find Pope's name in the list. The result of the publication was to extend his fame, and to improve his fortunes by about four hundred guineas. At the same time it determined him to a literary career, and from the moment of that determination wig-making languished, and the more leisurely occupation of bookselling filled his vacant hours. A period of great industry followed. Scarcely a year passed for the next decade but he was before the public with one or more offerings of original or editorial work. His editorial work was the collection of selected songs, both Scottish and English, into '*The Tea-Table Miscellany*,' and a series of Scottish poems, purporting to have been "wrote by the ingenious, before 1600," brought together into '*The Evergreen*' These collections contained compositions of his own, which were either too free morally or too dangerous politically to be owned amongst his authorised productions. Of these anonymous poems the best is, undoubtedly, '*The Vision*,' which may, indeed, be regarded as Ramsay's most ambitious effort, and certainly reveals an unusual sweep and power of imagination. In creative work he ventured unfortunately into fields foreign alike to his genius and his art; he took to imitating Pope, and produced some very laborious essays in English verse, and a few sad but unsorrowful elegies. His true sphere and talent lay in the use of the Scottish language upon themes of national interest. Of this he was well aware; but he could not altogether resist the temptation to enter the lists with his English contemporaries and encounter them with their own weapons. His English verses, of which he wrote far too many, may show his culture, but they give no indication of his genius.

The quarto of which we have spoken appeared in 1721. Seven years later he published a companion quarto con-

taining the pieces written in the interval, and then he rested from poetical labours. The period of his literary activity altogether extended over twenty years, of which the first five were the years of his apprenticeship. He gave over when he ceased to write with facility,—when, as he said, he found his muse beginning to be “dour and dory.”¹ He had, however, used the pen too long and too assiduously to be able entirely to forego the luxury of its use, and an occasional epistle in verse towards the end of his life showed that if he composed with more effort he also composed with more pith.

The second quarto established Ramsay's fame. It contained the composition which gave him the most satisfaction, and which best illustrates the true character of his genius, the charming pastoral drama of ‘The Gentle Shepherd.’ It became instantly popular, and so excited the envy of enemies who had hitherto identified him with the school of art which delights to minister to immorality, that they absurdly refused him the authorship. The germ of the play will be found in two detached pastoral poems in the first quarto, where they seem to have attracted little attention. Ramsay ran them together as the first and second scenes of a drama which beautifully and naturally evolves the story they half suggest. No more pleasing and effective moral agency than this dramatic pastoral, the Bible alone excepted, ever entered the cottages of the Scottish peasantry. Its morality is of the best type; it is the morality of common-sense, practicable, honest, and cheerful.

From his forty-fifth year onwards till his death at the age of seventy-two, in 1758, Ramsay occupied himself chiefly with the enjoyment of his literary fame and the society or welfare of his children, and with the extension of his business as a burgess of Edinburgh. His bookseller's shop in High Street looked out upon the busiest, as it was the most fashionable and

central, part of Edinburgh. It became a kind of lounge for the literary and professional men of the town. Here Gay used to waste the summer forenoons in congenial gossip with Ramsay, and find amusement in the motley crowds that thronged around the old Market Cross under the windows. It was here, too, that Ramsay instituted the Circulating Library, which, while it brought him in a substantial addition to his annual gains, introduced into Edinburgh the newest books published in London, and created and fostered a taste for reading, especially among the young, that was afterwards to bear good fruit in Scotland. There can be no doubt that the literary rivalry which sprang up between London and Edinburgh during the latter half of last century, a rivalry which Johnson lived to see and which Horace Walpole recognised, was in no small degree owing to the enterprise of Ramsay and the introduction of the Circulating Library. A feature of his library was the number of books of dramatic literature which it contained, and which were largely in demand by the younger part of the population. The cry was raised that Ramsay was polluting the morals of the city youth. He was unmoved by the cry, and continued to persevere in his plans for the enlightenment of the public. At this time there was not a single place of public amusement in Edinburgh except the Assembly, as it was called, which met for the recreation of dancing in the dreary fashion so picturesquely described for us by Oliver Goldsmith. There was no theatre. Ramsay resolved to erect a theatre at his own expense, and regulate the management of it so as to make its entertainments at once popular and elevating. At great cost the building was put up, and preparations were made for the opening day. The prices were already advertised. Nothing remained but that the house should be licensed. At the last moment, by a majority of the civic rulers, license was refused; the magistracy, who had the licensing power, had been

¹ Loth and sulky.

influenced by the clergy of the city ; they were not likely soon to change their views upon dramatic representations, and Ramsay was almost ruined. The ruin that threatened him awoke manifestations of wild delight among those who are known in Scotland as the Uncou Guid, and those others who had long been jealous of the success that had attended all his past enterprises. They preached at him, they lampooned him, they held him up as a fearful example of divine judgment. They published the Dying Words of Allan Ramsay, they set up A Looking-glass for Allan Ramsay. He tried to find redress by an appeal to the law. The lawyers told him that he had been damaged, but not injured—and with the nice legal distinction he was obliged to be satisfied. Finally he applied himself to his legitimate business, and in an incredibly short time retrieved his loss by the theatre, and amassed besides what seems to have been a very comfortable independency. Some considerable time before he retired fairly from business, he had built a queer octagonal villa on the Castle Hill, commanding an extensive view northwards of every variety of Scottish scenery, and here he comfortably closed a long, happy, and useful career. In his seventieth year he had written to the Laird of Pennycuik, one of his intimate friends :

“I plan to be
From shackling trade and danger free,
That I may, loose from care and strife,
With calmness view the edge of life,
And when a full ripe age shall crave,
Slide easily into my grave.”

His last days were as he had wished. They found him as free from care and strife as it has ever fallen to the lot of men in similar circumstances to be. His children, a son and two daughters, were everything that he could desire. The son, whom at much expense he had bred as an artist, was rising into fame, and, possessed as he was of much of his father's talent and disposition, was already showing those artistic and social qualities which were presently to secure for him the honour of portrait-painter and prime favourite at the court of George the Third. He was equally free from strife. He had enemies, but they were none of his making ; they were either the fault of the age, or the envious growth of his good fortune. He was both generous enough and wise enough to leave them alone. Satirist, of course, he was, but his satire was of that genial and even gentle kind, that aims at institutions rather than individuals, at manners rather than men, and is content with simple exposure. Ramsay, either as a poet or a man, needs no great critic to interpret him for us. His life, and his writings, which afford the best commentary on his life, are open to all who have eyes to see. But if we must find a critic of authority with whom our own opinion shall agree, we shall hardly find a better than Walter Scott, who brought the essential quality of the man into a single word when he called him “the joyous RAMSAY.”

J. LOGIE ROBERTSON.

AN ALEXANDRIAN AGE.

"**THERE IS,**" wrote Lord Tennyson not long ago to an enterprising gentleman (of American extraction) who had addressed him on the question—so dear to some critics, so delicate to all poets—the great and still-vexed question of plagiarism, "there is, I fear, a prosaic set growing up among us, editors of booklets, bookworms, index-hunters, or men of great memories and no imagination," and so forth. There was more in the indictment, but this is the gist of it for us just at present.

Other persons, less distinguished than Lord Tennyson, have found words for the same thought before him; and who does not remember how himself, when but plain Will Water-proof, one winter's evening many a long year ago was moved, by the relish of a vintage

"—whose father-grape grew fat
in Lusitanian summers,"

to grow somewhat maudlin-moral over the evil an age of little books was like to work on the vast heart of the poet? Only the other day Mr. Goldwin Smith asked in these pages if the noticeable stagnation in our literature and art might not be something more than the mere accidental meeting of the man and the moment, might not rather be a sign that the world had passed for ever out of its poetic youth into a maturity of science?

Perhaps for the mere fact that the present is a time of small creative activity in literature we need not be so greatly alarmed, but rather, indeed, hug ourselves in anticipation—we happy few, who still dare shut our ears to the honey-sweet voice of Mr. Herbert Spencer, and will not accept all poetry as mere sensual caterwauling. If we consider, it was so before

either of those splendid poetic outbursts that England has known. It was so before Marlowe built his mighty line to make ready the way for Shakespeare; it was so before Burns and Cowper struck the first notes of that great jubilee of song of whose dying strains even our own times have caught some fitful echoes. And now that a generation has arisen which can buy nineteen editions of '*The Epic of Hades*,' remembering what was in store for the children of the men who thought the author of '*The Triumphs of Temper*' a great poet, we may take heart of grace and hope that the end cannot be far off, and that even our old ears may yet be destined to catch the first notes of another Shelley carolling like his own sky-lark in the dawn of a new golden age.

But our present purpose is not to dip into the future—an enchanting pastime for the poet, but for us poor dwellers in this work-day world of prose, who cannot stay our hungry stomachs with such stuff as dreams are made of, an unsubstantial toil—our purpose, we say, is not with the future but the present. Let us try to accept the present and all its works, not grudgingly nor querulously, but, like honest Dogberry, giving God thanks and making no boast of it.

There is no doubt of our activity in the production of printed matter. Whatever the quality be, the quantity at least is Gargantuan. Some unknown sin has dipped us all in ink. There is, we believe, a statute of the realm which compels every publisher to send a copy of every book he publishes to the libraries of the British Museum and of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge. But unless a second Omar comes ere long to our help, surely the world itself will not

contain the books that shall be written. Sometimes one is tempted half to wish that one of our myriad-minded Governments would ordain another statute to check this inky torrent, or that the famous invention of Johann Fust could by some law of nature or device of man be wholly lost for a time. Could the brains and the types lie fallow for a generation or two it were no bad thing perhaps for the soil. But these wishes are idle. We must accept the present and all its works, and let the future do with them as it will: let our children's children, if it please them,

“gather as their own
The harvest that the dead have sown,
The dead forgotten and unknown.”

It is not easy to hit upon the precise note of any age, so as to fix and catalogue it for future use; and very far indeed from easy to do so for this many-sided age. Even Carlyle, who was fond of this cataloguing work, and in his roaring rough-shod way not unskilful at it, would be hard put to it here. The Age of Shams would hardly serve, for that title would be as applicable to a score or more of the ages that have gone before, and to all probably that shall come after. There is more reason in another suggestion we have somewhere seen—the Age of Whitewash, to mark the more than Christian charity with which ruffians of every grade of ruffianism, from an emperor to a mere poet, have been scrubbed down, and reproduced more golden and glittering than the Chrys-elephantine Zeus. But this again would carry us too far from our present purpose, which holds not of the domain of ethics but rather of the domain of aesthetics. So we have chosen the Alexandrian Age for our title. It is not, let us make haste to acknowledge, one of our own coining—a point, no doubt, in its favour; its significance, if any need an explanation, can very easily be explained.

After the final victory of Philip of Macedon at Chaeronea, the Greece that

had been was no more. She was dead, politically and intellectually; politically she was dependent on Philip, intellectually she was dependent on the memories of her past greatness. The eastern conquests of Philip's triumphant son, his early death and the consequent disruption of his empire into the three kingdoms of Macedonia, Asia, and Egypt, had spread the Greek language and the Greek civilisation everywhere. But the free Greek life that had made that language what it was, and inspired that literature, was dead. This civilisation, which is properly called Hellenism, as Professor Jebb tells us, produced a literature no longer spontaneous and creative, but derived from that already existing. Greek Literature, in short, had now become, in the Professor's words, a polite industry in which success was to be achieved by obeying and inventing critical canons; and, as a natural and inevitable consequence, it had become the prey of mannerism and affectation.

This period of Greek literature is commonly known as the Alexandrian Age, from the fact that in the years when this Hellenism, such as it was, was at its prime, the great Egyptian city of Alexandria was the intellectual centre of the world, and its rulers, the Ptolemies, the great patrons of all of art and literature that the world had then to show. “The place,” wrote Charles Kingsley of it as it was many centuries even after the era of the Ptolemies, when it had become a mere province of Rome, herself fast hastening to her fall, “the place seemed fragrant with all the riches of Greek thought and song, since the days when Ptolemy Philadelphus walked there with Euclid and Theocritus, Callimachus, and Lycophron.”¹

To inquire into the causes which have brought our literature to its present pass, if haply they may be found to have any affinity to those which worked on the literature of Greece, would be interesting, but not

¹ ‘Hypatia.’

to our purpose. Who was our Philip of Macedon? Who is our Alexander? When is the great division of Empire to be? Great questions!—but happily not ours to answer. Enough for us that the literary tendencies of the age (which Mr. Swinburne, who has, as every one knows, a neat hand at an epithet, has also marked as a “ghastly, thin-faced time”) are distinctly Alexandrian. Literature has become an industry, more or less polite; mannerism and affectation have—one can hardly say, indeed, begun to invade it; the temptation is rather to say, have taken entire possession of it.

Probably if any champion of the age were to think it worth his while to protest against such a charge, he would select for the particular point of his defence the great improvement in style that our literature shows everywhere, even in its most trifling and ephemeral work, the work of its daily newspapers, for instance. The sense for style, it will be said, has immensely grown of late years. Such a charge as that De Quincey brought against our fathers no one could bring against their sons. He, indeed, maintained that there never had been at any time in England a sufficient practical respect for the arts of composition, and that at the time he particularly censured this disrespect had increased to a most painful extent. “If you could look anywhere,” he declared,

“with a right to expect continual illustrations of what is good in the manifold qualities of style, it should reasonably be among our professional authors; but, as a body, they are distinguished by the most absolute carelessness in this respect. Whether in the choice of words or idioms, or in the construction of their sentences, it is not possible to conceive the principle of lazy indifference carried to a more revolting extremity. Proof lies before you, spread out upon every page, that no excuse of awkwardness, or of inelegance, or of unrhythymical cadence, is so rated in the tariff of faults as to balance in the writer’s estimate the trouble of remoulding a clause, of interpolating a phrase, or even of striking the pen through a superfluous word.”¹

¹ See an essay on Style in volume xi. of De Quincey’s collected works.

Now all this, it will be triumphantly affirmed, has been changed; of this contempt, at least, our literature has been completely purged. The recognition of the fact that something more goes to the making of good English prose than the random outpouring on paper of the first words that present themselves as sufficient to convey the writer’s thought; that prose has, in fact, certain inevitable laws of its own no less than poetry; that, like poetry, it must combine something of the quality of architecture with something of the quality of music; that the words must, as it were, be built up with the necessary balance and proportion, and that the cadence of a well-adjusted sentence should be as clear and convincing as the measures of verse—the recognition of these indisputable truths has become, we shall be told, a much more general possession than it was but a very few years ago. And this sense shows itself not only actively in our production, but in our judgments also. The general taste has greatly improved. We are more capable of testing and deciding for ourselves than we were. We are no longer affected with false glitter, and bow down before false idols; we have tumbled many a Dagon over the threshold, and torn the veil from many an impostor. But is this really so?

Among the many epigrams foisted upon the late Master of Trinity was one supposed to have been coined on a voluminous writer of the present day, of whom an ardent (female) admirer had just asserted that he had “so much taste.” “He has,” was the answer, “and all of it bad.” There can be no doubt that there is a great deal of “style” in our current literature—it has, that is to say, a very distinctive form and manner of its own; but that this style is the very best possible, or even very good, is perhaps not quite so certain.

Some time last year Mr. Louis Stevenson wrote a short essay on the technical elements of style in liter-

ature.¹ Mr. Stevenson has himself a very pretty talent that way, and one was naturally glad to learn his idea of an art in which he had shown himself to be no mean proficient. And certainly Mr. Stevenson provided one with a very entertaining piece of reading ; except in one passage where he became rather too technical for simple intelligences, and, finding the ordinary tongue apparently too limited for his purpose, had recourse to some mystic combinations of letters which might have had something to do with algebra, but had certainly nothing to do with literature. But entertaining as the paper was, it really explained nothing but the one fact—patent to every one with the slightest capacity for appreciating the beauties of style—that there was nothing capable of explanation. And the singular part of the performance was that Mr. Stevenson was himself frankly conscious of the utility of it all. “The amateur,” he said, “will always grudgingly receive details of a method which can be stated, but can never wholly be explained.” And again: “Each phrase of each sentence, like an air or a recitative in music, should be so artfully compounded out of long and short, out of accented and unaccented, as to gratify the sensual ear. And of this the ear is the sole judge. It is impossible to lay down laws. Even in our accentual and rhythmic language no analysis can find the secret of the beauty of a verse; how much less, then, of these phrases, such as prose is built of, which obey no law but to be lawless and yet to please.” Precisely: the quality of style cannot be analysed or defined; it must be spiritually discerned.

It is assuredly no part of our purpose to attempt to succeed where Mr Stevenson has failed. And, indeed, though it is indisputable that a good style in writing, as in all other artistic work, can only be learned by the study of good models (though nature will,

¹ ‘The Contemporary Review,’ April, 1885.

of course, make the time of apprenticeship pass easier and quicker to some than others), yet to endeavour to teach the art of writing as David Ramsay might have taught his lads to take a watch to pieces and put it together again, strikes us as about as hopeless a task as Izaak Walton owned it was “to make a man that was none to be an angler by a book.” But a little time might be passed, not unpleasantly to those who may be in the mood, in considering how far our present practice is in accord with what would have been once called the universal laws of prose composition, where, if at all, it runs counter to them, and from what causes.

There is a passage in Coleridge’s ‘Table Talk,’ as reported by his nephew, which contains perhaps as concise and sound a definition of good prose as it would be possible to construct; and as he proceeded, according to his custom, to amplify and illustrate the definition, we cannot do better than give the passage in the great talker’s own words:

“The definition of good prose is—proper words in their proper places; of good verse—the most proper words in their proper places. The propriety is in either case relative. The words in prose ought to express the intended meaning, and no more; if they attract attention to themselves, it is, in general, a fault. In the very best styles, as Southey’s, you read page after page, understanding the author perfectly, without once taking notice of the medium of communication; it is as if he had been speaking to you all the while. But in verse you must do more; there the words, the *media*, must be beautiful, and ought to attract your notice—yet not so much and so perpetually as to destroy the unity which ought to result from the whole poem. This is the general rule; but, of course, subject to some modifications, according to the different kinds of prose or verse. Some prose may approach towards verse, as oratory, and therefore a more studied exhibition of the *media* may be proper; and some verse may border more on mere narrative, and there the style should be simpler.”

As marking a distinction the definitions are not perhaps worth much, and the desire to be antithetical and

epigrammatic has, as will sometimes happen even with the cleverest, been gratified, in the case of the definition of verse, rather at the expense of better things. But it would be hard to frame a simpler and more conclusive definition of good prose than this, *proper words in their proper places*. At that no one surely will cavil, especially when he takes the qualifying clause, *the propriety is in either case relative*; that is so obviously rich in possibilities, and capable of being expanded to suit almost every whim. But when we get a little farther, when we find that the quality of good prose is that it should not attract notice to itself, that the reader's attention should not be diverted from the author's meaning to his mode of expression—then we come at once on debateable ground. For surely this is the very point at issue between the “young light-hearted masters” of the modern prose and the homely veterans of the old school. Has it not been roundly declared that the vital fact for an author to consider now is not what he has to say, but how he is to say it? Small wonder surely that a writer who starts with this theory should be very precise indeed in his words.

De Quincey thought that our native disregard for the graces of style had its origin in the native manliness of our character, “in the sincerity and directness of the British taste, in the principle of *esse quam videri*, which might be taken as the key to much in our manner, much in the philosophy of our lives.” Far be it from us to assert the converse of this theory, but it is certain that manliness is not just at this moment the capital distinction of our literature either in prose or verse. With the latter we will not now concern ourselves. There is plenty of it, to be sure, of a kind; but even at its best the poetry of the Victorian era has always had, among its manifold gifts and graces, a tendency to disregard two at least out of the three canon laws of Milton, simplicity and

passion. And now, what is there to say but that

“the best are silent now,”

or at the most strike here and there a solitary note in which gratitude tries hard to catch some echo of the earlier strain? But it is with our prose work that we have just now to do, and that no one can well maintain to be, whatever else it be, pre-eminently robust, sincere, and direct—in a word, pre-eminently manly. In the general bulk of our original work this quality of manliness is certainly not conspicuous; in our criticism it is, one might say, entirely wanting; and in our more serious work, historical, philosophical, and the like, the general tendency is to a minute, dissecting, curious mood, more given to pulling down than to building up. And this tendency is inevitably reflected in the style. The modern style is, indeed, the modern man.

Lord Tennyson, as we have seen, complains that the new generations have no imagination but much memory. For the imagination, well; but for the memory, one is tempted to ask what is it they remember? Surely they cannot remember the work of the great masters of our English Prose? If we take all the great writers of our country, from the time when prose had really won a kingdom of its own, from the time, that is to say, of Dryden, to the present, we shall find that the quality common to all of them is straightforwardness. Each one of them knew well what he wanted to say, and said it in the clearest and directest manner possible to him. They had, many of them, faults of their own, but no one of them is ever wilfully obscure; in no one of them is there a single passage it is necessary to read twice to take the meaning; in no one of them is a word tortured for the sake of effect into a usage for which it was never made. And with the writers whose place is truly among the poets,

or with those whose fame supports a divided duty, writers like Gray, Cowper, Byron, Scott, Wordsworth—how sound and pure is their prose, how clear, unaffected, and straightforward. Even with men such as Keats and Shelley, from whom one might have looked for something ethereal, fantastic, something not quite of this world, when they came down to earth to write plain prose, their language is as simple and to the purpose as though they had never written a line of poetry in their lives. Shelley told his friend Gisborne that it were as wise to go to a gin-shop for a leg of mutton as to expect anything human or earthly from him; but in his prose this certainly was not so. And except those last ones, written when he was weak and unstrung in the grasp of a mortal disease, and so cruelly made public a few years ago, the excellent common sense, manliness, and clear perception of things conspicuous in Keats's letters are perhaps, considering his age and circumstances, even more astonishing than his marvellous poetical gifts. Yet none can say our great prose-writers wanted a style. No man ever wrote prose more surely in the grand manner than Bolingbroke; for purity, sweetness, and simplicity what writer has ever matched Goldsmith? Take again the men of a later day, take Southey, Hallam, Arnold, Thirlwall, Macaulay; whatever their faults may be, no one can charge them with obscurity or affectation.

The old order has changed indeed. The essence of a good prose style now seems to be to coin new words, or, if the genius of the writer be not equal to that, to drag out of the lumber-rooms of the past words long thrown away and forgotten; to twist familiar words to unfamiliar uses, or out of some seeming harmless combination of homely syllables to weave some fantastic phrase that shall put them all to shame—as who should trick out some good honest son of the Victorian soil in the tawdry tarnished splen-

dours of the Carolan court. The latest and certainly one of the most amazing instances of this sleight of pen that we have met with may be found in a little book professing to be a biography of Ben Jonson, wherein the writer, wishing to say that the jolly tavern life of those times provoked men to drink more than was good for them, concealed the vulgar truth by observing that *the tavern had the defect of its quality*. It is but fair, however, to say that this is a particular case; it is not every one, it is perhaps not any one but the master, who can conjure with that wand.

This form of writing is, of course, in itself no new thing. No age has lacked its Euphuists. But in the old time it was but a modish affectation practised for sheer idleness, as a man might spend a summer day in exegogitating a new pattern for his sword-knot or cravat. That was then the humour of it, and as such it was recognised and laughed at. But to-day it seems to be the very end and aim of our young ambitions, the very form and pressure of the time; not laughed at, though perchance grieved for by the judicious few, but rather courted and toiled after, as men might toil after virtue. The diagnosis of the disease is somewhat complicated. In part, no doubt, it comes from that overweening desire for notoriety which disfigures so much of our modern art, and is perhaps at once the most pitiful and the most ridiculous quality of the time. The uncouth buffooneries which seem to pass with some simple souls for the consummation of fine acting have, it may here be remarked, their origin in the same insane craving; and so also have those impudent experiments on the folly of the age in which certain young painters are encouraged to indulge. For this desire flatters itself with the pretence of originality, and with Pharisaic complaisancy takes pride that it is not as others are. Both De Quincey and Hazlitt marked this disease as not uncommon in their day.

Says the former, in that essay already quoted :

" Amongst the myriads who are prompted to authorship by the coarse love of reputation, or by the nobler craving for sympathy, there will always be thousands seeking distinction through novelties of diction. Hopeless of any audience through mere weight of matter, they will turn for their last resource to such tricks of innovation as they can bring to bear upon language. What care they for purity or simplicity of diction, if at any cost of either they can win a special attention to themselves ? "

And Hazlitt lashes the same sort of pretenders yet more fiercely, as his custom was :

" They cannot get beyond the daubings of fancy, the varnish of sentiment. Objects are not linked to feelings, words to things, but images revolve in splendid mockery, words represent themselves in their strange rhapsodies. The categories of such mind are pride and ignorance—pride in outside show, to which they sacrifice everything, and ignorance of the true worth and hidden structure both of words and things. With a sovereign contempt for what is familiar and natural, they are the slaves of vulgar affectation—of a routine of high-flown phrases. Scorning to imitate realities, they are unable to invent anything, to strike out one original idea. They are not copyists of nature, it is true ; but they are the poorest of all plagiarists, the plagiarists of words. All is far-fetched, dear-bought, artificial, oriental in subject and allusion ; all is mechanical, conventional, vapid, formal, pedantic in style and execution. They startle and confound the understanding of the reader by the remoteness and obscurity of their illustrations ; they soothe the ear by the monotony of the same everlasting round of circuitous metaphors. They are the *mock-school* in poetry and prose. They flounder about between fustian in expression and bathos in sentiment. They tantalize the fancy, but never reach the head nor touch the heart." 1

If this were all, if the craving for notoriety were the only cause at work, then it were small matter. The disease would carry its remedy with it, for it would inevitably come to pass that distinction would have at last to be found in a return to the old idiomatic English of our fathers. But there is a deeper evil at work. It is painfully clear that with many

writers, who have no need to go about so insanely to achieve distinction, the disease comes simply from a failure of ideas. The late Lord Houghton (who, among his other titles to our regard, was a merry man) is reported to have excused himself when rebuked by Carlyle for writing poetry by the plea that he found it so useful for concealing the commonplace. This fantastic jargon is mighty useful for the same work. One notes this especially in a certain sort of novels, wherein page after page of the most curious language is spent in describing the mode of a lady's dress or the grace with which she sips her tea. Not in this way did the great story-tellers write. Turn to the greatest of them all, turn to Sir Walter Scott : there, in those incomparable romances, one truly finds what Coleridge has marked as the essence of good prose—" You read page after page, understanding the author perfectly without once taking notice of the medium of communication." The brisk movement of the story, the reality of the scenes, the variety of the characters and the true dramatic instinct (though a play Sir Walter could not write) with which they are made to reveal and explain themselves, the humour and the pathos, all the grand healthy humanity of the man and his work—page after page one turns in delighted unconsciousness of the means whereby all these wonders are wrought ; nor is it till all is over, and the whole effect is before you, clear and vivid as though you had yourself been an actor in the scenes, that you realise how great a master of his art must he be who can thus with a stroke of his pen call back the long vanished past, and bid the dead bones live. And even those who are conspicuous for their sense of style, Thackeray, for instance, and Hawthorne, wrote not in this way ; their native language was always good enough for them ; they always write "like a man of God's making." But it is perhaps in our current criticism that these Armados are more undis-

¹ 'Essays on Men and Manners'—On Familiar Style.

guisedly rampant ; for here the ideas, where they are anything more than sheer fantasy or the tritest commonplaces, being almost invariably taken from the men whom the critics have set themselves to supersede, it is imperatively necessary to disguise them in arabesques of the most bewildering pattern. We have no hesitation in saying, though we incur thereby the terrific curse of Philistinism, that we would far sooner put in a young reader's hand the criticisms of such men as Hallam, Jeffrey, and Macaulay, than of all the criticasters who have sneered at them since. With the former he would be sure, at least, of two good things—good sense and good English ; and, after reading an article in the current number of the '*Quarterly Review*,' we may add that his young ideas would certainly not be harassed by the astounding confusion, to say the least of it, which seems to mark the present system of teaching English Literature in the University of Cambridge.

There is a third cause which may possibly co-operate with the two already named, and that is, indolence. It may sound paradoxical to reproach a generation, at whose astounding fertility of production we have but just been wondering, with indolence ; yet so it is. If we consider their work we shall see that beyond the mere physical exertion of driving the pen over the paper the proportion of labour involved in it is very small. Consider, for example, the sort of novels which one of their most industrious fabricators has assured us is the only sort tolerable now. What intellectual toil can have gone to their making ? They tell no story, they evolve no plot ; action they have none ; their characters are not new, nor their incidents, if they have any. So far as they are anything at all beyond so many pounds avoirdupois of printed matter, they are literal transcripts of the commonplace transactions and chatter of the every-day life around us. Now, though the disciples and admirers of the famous school of

Realism may stare at our audacity, we make bold to affirm that there is nothing in the world easier than this sort of writing. There is no man, nor woman neither, who resolves to set down precisely all that he or she may see or hear in four and twenty hours, say, of waking life, but shall turn you out your realistic novel, as the Grand Lama of Thibet will turn you out your prayers, by the yard. Such work needs not invention, nor imagination, nor fancy. The only quality of the artist it calls for is the sense of proportion, the faculty of selection ; and that, anybody who has once experimented on this school of fiction will know well it rarely, if ever, gets. A writer, content to produce this sort of stuff, may write, as Theseus sits, for ever ; and according as his taste leads him to Mayfair or to Seven Dials for his copying-ground, so will his literature be a polite industry, or the reverse. What matter that "he draweth out the thread of his verbosity finer than the staple of his argument," if only the verbosity be of the right texture ? But then, it may be asked, some labour surely is needed to master this new tongue ; it cannot come, like reading and writing, by nature ? It is the easiest trick in the world, that the veriest tyro shall master in "the posteriors of a day, which the rude multitude call the afternoon." Let us take Hazlitt again, and hear how it is to be done :

"It is as easy to write a gaudy style without ideas, as it is to spread a pallet of showy colours, or to smear in a flaunting transparency. . . . The florid style is the reverse of the familiar. The last is employed as an unvarnished medium to convey ideas ; the first is resorted to as a spangled veil to conceal the want of them. When there is nothing to be set down but words, it costs little to have them fine. Look through the dictionary, and cull out a *florilegium*, rival the *tulipomania*. Rouge high enough, and never mind the natural complexion. The vulgar, who are not in the secret, will admire the look of preternatural health and vigour ; and the fashionable, who regard only appearances, will be delighted with the imposition. Keep to your sounding generalities, your tinkling phrases, and all will be well. Swell out an

unmeaning truism to a perfect tympany of style. A thought, a distinction is the rock on which all this brittle cargo of verbiage splits at once. Such writers have merely *verbal* imaginations, that retain nothing but words. . . . Their most ordinary speech is never short of an hyperbole, splendid, imposing, vague, incomprehensible, magniloquent, a cento of sounding commonplaces."

Some few years ago we were sitting with a friend in a theatre, watching one of those dreary travesties of French essays in adultery which then constituted the most popular form of English drama. "It is curious," observed our friend, "that now, while everybody is crying out for an original play, nobody has conceived the idea of representing a husband and wife faith-

ful to and contented with each other." It is surely curious that now, while everybody is straining every nerve to be original, nobody has conceived the idea of writing English. Let it be granted that, as we have surmised, nobody now has very much, if anything, to say; at least, there would be something new in proclaiming this fact in what was once our native tongue. Moreover, the practice might lead to broader and still happier issues: for if our professors of the polite industry of literature could see their works translated into plain English, it might give them pause. And a little pause would be just now so very beneficial to all parties.

THE PROTECTORATE OF PORCOLONGU.

Who does not know the island of Porcolongu, and the group to which it gives its name—loveliest cluster of islets with which the hand of Nature has sprinkled the sunny bosom of the South Pacific? Its name has long been familiar to every Board-school boy in the kingdom; and so keenly has the present rage for annexation stimulated the study of geography in the official world, that there are few of the more punctually arriving clerks in the Foreign Office who cannot make shift to find it on a good map before it is time to go out for lunch. No island even in that favoured region is more blest. Its climate is delicious, its people contented, its king convivial. The demands of the Australian labour-market do not expose it to more than an occasional visit from vessels engaged in the coolie-traffic—whose crews, moreover, rarely use their revolvers nowadays, except in cases of very obstinate resistance. Porcolongu rejoices in a European Prime Minister, declared by travellers who have enjoyed his hospitality to possess the best (for surely the strongest is the best) head in the southern hemisphere; and it is the diocesan seat of a most zealous colonial bishop, always courteously ready to offer ghostly counsel to any member of his flock who can make it convenient to call upon him at the Atheneum between two and four.

It was not to be supposed that a spot so rich in natural and acquired advantages would long remain unnoticed by any of the Great Powers of Europe. As lying in the high road to nowhere, its position eminently fitted it for use as a coaling-station by vessels plying on that route, and was at the same time calculated to impress every European Power with the neces-

sity of annexing the group as a mere measure of self-protection against the aggressive designs of its neighbours. Accordingly, in the year 188— it suddenly occurred to two Continental States that they had subjects in Porcolongu whose interests had been too long neglected; and they proceeded to establish consulates there without further delay. Diplomacy has earned so bad a name for its method of treating facts that it should in common justice be here recorded that this was no mere pretext on the part of the two Continental States in question. There were three Frenchmen, one of them an escaped convict from New Caledonia, and two Germans, both fugitives from military service, resident on the island; so that Mr. Quillitt, the ambitious and discontented British Consul who had been for some years protecting the five British subjects in Porcolongu, could only report to his Government that this movement on the part of France and Germany "appeared" to him "suspicious,"— adding that, though there was a "marked disparity between the French, and still more between the German interests requiring protection and those of Great Britain, he was not prepared to express an absolute conviction that the attitude of the two Powers indicated any designs of territorial acquisition on the part of either."

Mr. Quillitt's, however, was not the only bosom in which suspicion was aroused. The arrival of the French and German Consuls awoke uneasiness also in that part of The O'Mara Molloy's person which he was wont to describe, at the same time striking it, as "me har't"; for its owner was shrewdly sensible that if Porcolongu were to pass into the hands of any

European Power, the occupation of The O'Mara, like that of The O'Thello, would be gone for ever. Now this enterprising and ingenious Irishman was growing old, and knew it. Though descended, like a working majority of his fellow-countrymen, from the ancient kings of Ireland, there were reasons (not unconnected with pecuniary liabilities) which made him unwilling to return to the land over which his ancestors had once ruled; and his various sojourns in different parts of the world had done more for the enlargement of his mind than of his means. He had on two occasions succeeded in acquiring a moderate fortune (on paper) by services rendered to the successful candidate (who ultimately became by the vigorous employment of paid canvassers in military uniform the sole competitor) for the Presidency of a South American Republic; but his gains had in each case, through an imprudent delay of more than a fortnight in realising them, been swept away by a counter-revolution. Chance had brought him to Porcolongu; great gifts, both of administration and of trade rum, had commanded him to the notice of its king; and the impulsive gratitude of the monarch had soon afterwards pressed the post of Prime Minister on the accomplished stranger who had been the first to bring him under the civilising influences of "poker." The opportunities of the post had enabled The O'Mara Molloy to lay by a certain provision for his old age, but one by no means sufficient, as he felt, to maintain the state becoming his royal extraction, and the prospect of finding himself turned adrift at an early date by the representative of some annexing or protecting European Power gave him considerable anxiety. Clearly it was necessary for him to make hay while the sun shone.

A day or two after the lineal descendant of Brian Boroihme had come to this conclusion, a knock at the door aroused Mr. Quillitt from his afternoon siesta in the little shanty

which was dignified by the name of the British Consulate.

"Come in," cried the British Consul drowsily. "Oh! it's you, Molloy, is it?" Mr. Quillitt never recognised the Prime Minister's chieftainship of his sept, in familiar intercourse. "Why, what the devil is the matter?" he continued, his attention arrested by the look of portentous gravity on the Premier's face.

"Matter is it?" said The O'M. M., shutting the door behind him with a mysterious air. "It's the devil and all the matter, me boy; as ye'll say hwhan I tell ye."

"Well, speak out, man! what is it?" inquired Mr. Quillitt with impatience, and apparently quite forgetful of the fact that he was addressing the First Minister of the Crown. "Have you dropped an ace out of your sleeve, or has the King joined the Blue Ribbon Army?"

"Misther Quillutt, sorr!" replied his visitor with much dignity, "your jokes are unbecoming, and my business is serious—anny way for you and your Government. And let me say, sorr, that since 'tis little enough that The O'Mara Molloy owes to the oppressors of me country, the kindness I'm doing yourself personally by this visit should be the more appreciated."

"I beg your Excellency's pardon," said the Consul with mock gravity, which, however, soon became real on hearing his companion's next sentence.

"'Twould be bad for you in Downing Street, I imagine, Mr. Quillutt," said the illustrious Irishman, "if the French were to annex Porcolongu, and you had heard devil a word about it until after the tricolor had been hoisted."

"Eh? what? annex it?" exclaimed Quillitt much alarmed. "What makes you think they are going to—"

"Never mind what makes me think ut," said the statesman loftily. "A Proime Minister, sorr, is not at liberty to revele the sources of his information. Enough that I have been made acquaintud through a trusty egeent

with M. de Chauvin's instructions, and I'm informed that in the course of a few weeks unless—*unless*, mind—something occurs to prevent ut, the whole group will pass under the French flag."

"Good God!" ejaculated the Consul, convinced by the solemnity of the Minister's manner. "But something *must* be done, the thing *must* be prevented."

"You're right, me boy," said his visitor, with a smile of satisfaction at the impression which he had made, and which he saw might by judicious management be indefinitely increased.

After about half an hour's conversation his Excellency took his departure, leaving Mr. Quillitt in a state of considerable perturbation. His confidence in The O'Mara Molloy's judgment, or even in his veracity, was not boundless; but in the present case the Prime Minister's statement derived only too much credibility from the circumstances. The establishment of the French and German consulates in Porcolongu had struck Mr. Quillitt from the first as suspicious. What could France and Germany want with a Consul to protect their three French and two German subjects on the island? It was not as though, like England, they had five citizens to look after, and a sixth (or, if twins, a sixth and seventh) expected. Decidedly this step on the part of these Powers portended something; and it might be as well to be on one's guard. Some bold precautionary stroke was necessary; and after long rumination Mr. Quillitt devised and determined on it. Next morning, accordingly, he attired himself in his consular uniform (a compliment which he always paid the Prime Minister whenever he was about to make him any questionable proposal) and went round to The O'Mara Molloy's official residence at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

His Excellency was sitting under his veranda in his shirt-sleeves, smoking his after-breakfast cigar, with a cooling, but not too cooling, drink

before him. Noticing his visitor's attire, he proposed, with the native courtesy of his race, to array himself in the cocked hat "bequaithed to me uncle by a mar'shal of France," which, not of course unaccompanied by other though less imposing articles of apparel, constituted his official costume.

Mr. Quillitt begged him not to trouble himself. "I have called, your Excellency," he said, with much solemnity of manner, "to resume, if I may be permitted to do so, our conversation of yesterday with reference to the designs of France upon his Majesty's possessions."

The O'Mara Molloy bowed with a dignity equal to that of the Consul, but remained silent.

"So grave do I consider the situation, as disclosed to me in your Excellency's statement, that I propose taking immediate steps—diplomatic of course," he added, after a momentary pause, and in a tone of meaning, which, however, produced no responsive sign upon his companion's face, "with a view to the protection of the British interests which would be endangered by a French annexation of the group. The most judicious course of procedure would be, I think, to endeavour to negotiate a treaty of alliance with his Majesty, King Afsees-ova, whereby, in consideration of his Majesty's agreeing to recognise a British Protectorate over his dominions, the British Government would on their part guarantee an undisturbed sovereignty over them to him and his heirs for ever. May I count on your Excellency's good offices in bringing about such an arrangement?"

"Ye may, sorr," said The O'Mara Molloy, after a few moments of statesmanlike reflection. "But it's impossible to pledge meself that me efforts will be successful."

"I will address a despatch to your Excellency," said Mr. Quillitt, with a smile flickering at the corner of his mouth, "pointing out to you what I deem to be the commanding reasons which should determine you in the

interests both of your native and your adopted country to conclude the Convention which I suggest."

"Will your argyments be addressed to his Majesty, or to me personally?" inquired The O'M. M., with a twinkle in his eye.

"To you personally," said the British Consul, the smile taking firmer possession of his lips. And producing a fat pocket-book from his pocket, he proceeded: "Inclosure A, in despatch No. So-and-so, will contain this powerful appeal to your Excellency's fine sense of political expediency." With which words he waved gently before the eyes of his companion a small oblong slip of paper bearing the brief but pregnant legend, "I.O.U. 500/- The O'Mara Molloy."

The blood of another line of sovereigns (less than five hundred perhaps, but still a considerable number) flushed up into the cheeks of the Prime Minister, and lent a deeper purple to his kingly nose.

"Never!" he exclaimed with indignant emphasis, as soon as the power of speech returned. "Never! Divil a treaty do ye get from me, Mr. Quillitt, on such terms as those!"

"But, my dear fellow—"

"Not another word, sorr! I'm astonished that a representative of the British Crown should insult a British subject by asking um to traffic in his debts of honour."

Mr. Quillitt was abashed. It had occurred to him that the most economical way of securing the Minister's good offices would be to forgive him a debt he had contracted to the Consul in the vicissitudes of *écarté*. But he had not taken sufficient account of the sensitive pride which animates the breasts of those Irishmen whose ancestors were summoned to rule by the acclamations of their countrymen on the Hill of Tara. Nor perhaps had he appraised with sufficient exactitude the pecuniary value of the Prime Minister's "paper" in the modest estimation of its signatory.

There was nothing for it, [Mr.

Quillitt perceived, but to offer his Excellency something down, and the Consul at last resolved after further reflection to "go a monkey" (as he expressed it) out of his own pocket. If the *coup* came off, he might look to be reimbursed out of the secret service money; if it failed — well, he could still trust, he thought, to his superior force at *écarté* to compel the Prime Minister to disgorge some, if not the whole, of his gains. He accordingly lost no time in arranging the matter by the despatch of a cheque for the amount above specified, and sat down to draft an artfully worded communication to the Foreign Office, informing that department that he had "just received through his Excellency General The O'Mara Molloy, the able and distinguished Minister of his Majesty the King of Porcolongu, information which left no room for doubt that the French Government were meditating the almost immediate annexation of the group"; that "his Majesty had, at any rate, instructed his Prime Minister to say that he viewed the present position of affairs with extreme apprehension, and to sound the representative of her Britannic Majesty at Porcolongy as to the willingness of the British Government to conclude a Treaty of Alliance and Protectorate with King Afseesova, whereby to secure his independence against the threatened attack." Mr. Quillitt went on to add that, "in the undeniably grave and urgent circumstances of the case he had not felt himself warranted in rejecting definitively and on his own authority the overtures thus made to him; and had accordingly informed his Excellency the Prime Minister that, subject of course to the approval of her Majesty's Government, and on the distinct understanding that they were to be in no way bound by his action, he was willing to consider the draft of such a treaty, and to take all the preliminary steps required to put him in a position to sign it on receiving the due official authority to do so."

It need hardly be said that before despatching this telegram (and indeed before sending The O'Mara Molloy that oblong slip of argumentative paper which had finally convinced the Prime Minister of the necessity of British Protectorate of Porcolonqu) Mr. Quillitt had taken the precaution of stipulating for an actual and immediate execution of the treaty on his Majesty's side. The instrument lay before him duly signed, as he was putting the final touches to his telegram. It contained only three clauses, but was conceived in perfectly clear and satisfactory terms.

"Had you much difficulty in obtaining his Majesty's signature?" inquired Quillitt of the Prime Minister, eying the subscription with a somewhat doubting air.

"Divil a ha'porth!" was the ready reply. "Hwhy would there be anny? Ye just prop um up a bit and hold uz hand."

"The Royal sign-manual seems a little less bold and firm than I should have expected from a man of his Majesty's character," said the Consul still doubtful.

"Bedad! it's furrum enough for a man in his Majesty's condition," said the Minister, with a twinkle.

"Did your audience last so long, then?" asked Mr. Quillitt.

"As long as the matayrials," was the reply. "We didn't leave a dhrop in the bottle."

"H'm," said the Consul, still inspecting the signature; "the right-hand stroke is good enough, but the left-hand one's very jumpy: barely intersects the other at all, in fact. However, I've seen worse—on a ballot-paper: and your counter-signature binds *you*, in any case."

Mr. Quillitt's telegram was despatched accordingly, and he waited with considerable confidence for an approving reply from Lord St. Jingo. Unfortunately, however, it was some weeks since the last mail had brought news from England, and Lord St. Jingo, instead of guiding the foreign

policy of the country from Downing Street, was at that moment enjoying the sweets of newly-recovered liberty at his country-house. A change of Ministry had occurred since Mr. Quillitt's last advices, and Lord Shivers of Shakerley had succeeded to his rival's place. A week did not elapse before the Consul received an agitated telegram in the following words: "Suspend negotiations at once. Despatch follows"; and with the arrival of the mail a few hours later, bringing word of the political events which had taken place, the whole mystery was explained. Mr. Quillitt at once divined that his counsels of *haute politique* had been rejected with something like dismay by the new Foreign Secretary, and began to apprehend a wigging for himself. In the despatch from Downing Street which reached him a few weeks later he found ample justification for his fears.

"I am directed to inform you," wrote the Permanent Secretary, "that her Majesty's Government, while fully sensible of the zeal by which you have been animated, and the promptitude with which you have acted, are unable to approve of the course which you have pursued. You will take an early opportunity of seeking another interview with his Excellency the Prime Minister of Porcolonqu, and will inform him that her Majesty's Government do not share the apprehensions which have been expressed by him on behalf of his Sovereign, and that they regard the step recommended by him as altogether premature. Her Majesty's Government continue to receive assurances of the most friendly character from the Government of the French Republic, and they see no reason to believe that that Government entertains any designs of territorial acquisition in the Pacific. I am to add that though her Majesty's Government do not question the excellence of the motives which induced you to give provisional countenance to the proposal of a Protectorate, they cannot acquit you of a grave error of

judgment in taking that course ; and, with a view to prevent the recurrence of any similar misunderstanding, I am to request that, before entertaining any future proposal which may be made to you by or on behalf of his Majesty the King of Porcolongu you will submit it to her Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and await his instructions."

Having completed the perusal of this most disagreeable communication, Mr. Quillitt uttered a sentence which, without being actually a prayer, was not unlike one in point of grammatical construction. He posted off at once to the Prime Minister and flung down the despatch before him without a word. The O'Mara Molloy read it through with an unmoved countenance, folded it up, and returned it to his visitor.

"I congratulate ye, Mr. Quillutt," was all he said.

"Congratulate me ! What do you mean ? On what ?"

"On the tranquillitee of your conscience, sorr," replied the Prime Minister, with much dignity. "It must be a great satisfaction to ye to reflect that, however blind your Government, you, at least, have done your duty to your counthry."

"Oh ah ! yes, of course,—and all that," said Mr. Quillitt, though with but chastened enthusiasm. "But I say, Molloy—you know—that five hundred—eh ? Don't you think—wouldn't it be fairer—especially considering—eh ? What do you say ?"

But The O'Mara Molloy had said nothing. He was gazing out into the distance with a far-away look in his eyes, as though striving to descry the Hill of Tara through the haze of the centuries.

"Explain yourself, Mr. Quillutt," he said, after rousing himself with difficulty from his stately reverie.

"Well there is not much to explain," said the Consul, nettled into plain speaking. "That five hundred you got was, of course, conditional on the execution of the treaty."

"No doubt, sorr," was the Minister's reply. "And that is why you insisted on his Majesty's executing it."

"His Majesty ! Yes ! But what I mean is that the treaty was to be executed on our side too."

"Then, hwhat the devil hinders ye from executing it !" said The O'Mara Molloy, rising from his chair with an air of sternness which indicated that the audience was closed. "Ye're thrifing with me, Mr. Quillutt, and bedad, sorr, there is no man living who shall thrifle with The O'Mara Molloy without ruun' ut."

The British Consul was not wanting in resolution, and, thoroughly understanding his man, he would have taken his chance of "ruun' ut" if he had thought the moment a favourable one for a quarrel. But he was forced to admit to himself that after all there was something to be said for the Prime Minister's interpretation of their bargain, and, moreover, he did not yet feel sure that the draft treaty might not pay for itself after all. Mr. Quillitt, it is scarcely necessary to say, had not relied wholly on so doubtful an informant for intelligence as to the designs of France. He had prosecuted inquiries in other quarters, notably of the German Consul, Herr Wolkenkopf, a simple-minded, easily-handled Teuton, an ardent naturalist with apparently no thought or ambition connected with anything besides his hobby. The Machiavellian Mr. Quillitt had early conceived the idea of playing off one of these two foreign officials against the other, and as they consorted a good deal together, he immediately made it his business to pump the Herr for any information which he might have gathered in the confidence of social intercourse as to the diplomatic or other designs of Monsieur. And when he found, as he immediately did, that the attitude of M. de Chauvin, and the mysterious hints let fall by him from time to time, had aroused suspicion even in the unsuspecting heart of Herr Wolkenkopf himself (or so at least that artless child of nature averred),

why, Mr. Quillitt concluded not unreasonably that The O'Mara Molloy's warnings had confirmation enough. The French Government, he argued, must pretty soon open the eyes of Downing Street to their real intentions, and unless then they were very prompt in executing them, the draft Treaty of Protectorate, now safe in Mr. Quillitt's desk, would rapidly rise in value in the estimation of a panic-stricken English Foreign Office. All which considerations combined to reconcile Mr. Quillitt to "lying out of his monkey" for a time (as he described it in a phrase which may be commended to foreign professors of the English language), and determined him on playing a waiting game.

The waiting game, however, turned out to be a very long one; and the French Government appeared to be in no hurry to perform the expected ophthalmic operation upon Downing Street. Weeks passed, and the island of Porcolongu remained unannexed to the territories of the French Republic. M. de Chauvin made no sign, and the reluctant mind of Mr. Quillitt submitted itself gradually to the uncomfortable conviction that he had been "sold." The scion of Irish kings had bamboozled him, he began to fear, by a mere cock-and-bull story of French designs, and had left him five hundred pounds the poorer for having believed it. He said nothing either to The O'Mara Molloy or to any one else; but the imposture of which he had been made the victim was never out of his mind, and he spent many a sleepless night in revolving innumerable schemes of retaliation, or at the very least of reimbursement. It was some consolation to reflect that the luck had gone against him of late at *écarté*, and that, as he had taken the precaution of not paying his recent losses to the Prime Minister, he was now considerably in the latter's debt.

One night, about four months after the costly negotiation into which he had been so rashly induced to enter, Mr. Quillitt and the Prime Minister

sat battling together at *écarté* in the Consul's den. Her Britannic Majesty's representative had had emphatically a bad time. The luck had run for hours without an interruption in favour of the high-born Irishman, and that in such an overwhelming tide of good fortune that his opponent's undoubtedly superior skill had been utterly powerless to make head against it. The Consul's debt had doubled and trebled since they sat down, and when at a little after midnight he threw aside the cards in disgust, he found that his losses were close upon 300*l.* Mr. Quillitt made the addition with some difficulty, for he had been drinking hard—latterly and in the excitement of loss, a good deal too hard to allow him the full command of his faculties. At the same time, and by a confusion between subject and object which is very common among a certain class of the intoxicated, he was confidently persuaded that the more liquor he consumed the more helpless became the drunkenness of his companion.

"Molloy," said Mr. Quillitt, after eying the Prime Minister for a few minutes with an air of pity for his deplorable condition, "would you like me to pay you what I owe you?"

His creditor signified, with a courteous shrug, that though he was in no violent hurry he would not refuse to receive payment if it were offered him.

The Consul rose from his chair, walked with a somewhat unsteady step to his *escriatoire*, which he unlocked and opened with a still more unsteady hand, and, returning to the table with the Treaty of Alliance and Protectorate, "I have here, your Excellency," he said, his liquid consonants giving almost an Italian sound to his pronunciation of the last word, "a security of the value of 500*l.*, which I shall be happy to tender you in payment of my debt. Not a word!" he continued quickly, and with a deprecatory wave of his hand, on seeing that The O'Mara Molloy was about to

interrupt him. "Not a word! I am aware that the value is greater by two-fifths than the amount of my debt; but I waive the difference, sir, I waive the difference. Do you accept my offer?"

Surprise is not an emotion which, as a rule, depicts itself with facility on the countenance of a man who has consumed a bottle and a half of trade rum; but it was plainly visible on the face of Mr. Quillitt when the Prime Minister of Porcolongu for all answer produced a little sheaf of the Consul's L.O.U.'s, and, tossing them to him across the table, deliberately folded up the draft treaty and put it in his pocket.

"Good Heavens!" muttered Mr. Quillitt to himself, half sobered by his astonishment. "He is more drunk than I imagined. Ought I to take such an advantage of him?"

Promptitude of decision in difficult circumstances is second nature to a diplomatist, and the Consul instantaneously decided that he ought. He had sufficient command of himself to make the dignified bow of a man who is conscious of conferring a favour but is too generous to grudge it.

The Prime Minister finished his glass and took his leave, and in a few minutes his host, after carefully removing all his clothing with the exception of one boot, retired meditatively to rest.

On awaking, his head (save that it ached consumedly) contained no record of the previous night's proceedings. A glance, however, at his open desk, and at his L.O.U.'s lying on the table, struck dully on one of the slack chords of his memory, and he slowly raised himself to a sitting posture in bed, the better to review the situation. Yes: there was no doubt of it. He had re-sold the useless treaty to its author—useless even if the French designs on Porcolongu were not pure inventions of his, because Downing Street had so peremptorily rejected it—and had extinguished a debt of three hundred pounds by the transaction.

Decidedly the illustrious Irishman must have been very far gone in liquor. Indeed, now that Mr. Quillitt set to work to recall his speech and manner, it occurred to him that seldom in the whole course of his life had he seen a man more hopelessly intoxicated. His diplomatic conscience assured him that he had done right in taking advantage of the Prime Minister's unguarded condition of mind in order to rid himself of his bad bargain. He accordingly went about his not very onerous official duties that day as composedly as Socrates on the morning after the Symposium, and it was not till nearly nightfall that the blow fell. The western waters were glowing in all the glory of a Pacific sunset, when a telegram was placed in the Consul's hands, but only to fall helplessly from them the moment its contents were read: "Renew negotiations instantly Treaty Alliance Protectorate Porcolongu. Assure King sympathy support British Government. Despatch follows."

The Pacific Ocean swam before Mr. Quillitt's agitated eyes. He put his hand to his brow, and leaned against the wattled wall of Government House for support. What did it—what could it mean?

He had not long to wait for the explanation. Early next morning he received a private despatch from a somewhat highly-placed friend in the Foreign Office in these terms: "Liberals out on Conservative amendment four acres cow. St. Jingo back again. Congratulate you."

St. Jingo back again! All was clear, and Mr. Quillitt was ready to tear the few remaining locks from his head in disgust at his own impatent folly. There was but one thing to be done. The treaty must be re-purchased from The O'Mara Molloy if it cost the Consul all the savings of his official life to do it. But caution (diplomatic caution) was necessary. It would never do to allow the astute Polynesian statesman to suspect that his friend had any very important

object to gain in attempting to re-possess himself of the draft treaty.

"I have it," said Mr. Quillitt to himself after a few moments' cogitation. "I will pretend that it was I who was drunk, and that I only handed him over the treaty in a tipsy freak, which I understood him to be merely humouring—as a sober man—ha! ha!—will occasionally do with an intoxicated companion. Yes, it would certainly be better to pretend that I took too much that night." And full of this profound project of dissimulation he betook himself to the Prime Minister's shanty.

"Molloy," he said, with his most diplomatic assumption of carelessness, "do you know I am afraid I rather exceeded the bounds of moderation the other night, when you made such an example of me at *écarté*."

"Not a bit, me boy, not a bit," replied the Prime Minister cheerfully. "I never saw ye play a better game. Luck was against ye, that was all."

"Oh! as to the game,—that may be," said Mr. Quillitt, still outwardly indifferent, though his anxiety deepened apace at the line which his companion was taking; "I can play *écarté* well enough, however far gone I am. What I am thinking of is not how I played but how I paid. It was a foolish trick of me to square accounts with you by handing back that treaty."

"A foolish thrick ye call it," said his Excellency calmly. "And hwhy, pray?"

"Well—er—er—well, my dear fellow—for a diplomatist—you know—eh?—to part with a document like that—a public document—it would be thought rather—eh?"

"Bedad, sorr, I should have supposed it would have been thought a divilish deal more foolish thrick for a Prime Minister to buy back such a documint," said the other, looking at the Consul through half-closed eyes; "a threathy which your Government declines to execute."

"Exactly, precisely," exclaimed Mr.

Quillitt, catching eagerly at the new pretext thus offered to him. "I never supposed you were serious in accepting it from me. I thought you were merely humouring a friend who had had a drop too much. I couldn't think of holding you to so absurd a bargain; so I have brought you back my I.O.U.'s," producing them from his pocket, "and if you've got the treaty handy we'll swop at once."

"Misther Quillutt," said his Excellency, drawing himself up with his stateliest air, "I don't understand ye. I'm perfectly sathisfied with me bargin, and mean to abide by ut."

"What!" exclaimed the Consul, with increasing agitation. "You can't be serious—impossible. The whole thing was a joke. You couldn't have meant to have let me off a debt of nearly three hundred pounds for the recovery of a worthless——"

"Worthless!" cried the Irishman, bursting into a laugh. "Then hwhy the devil d'ye want ut back?"

Mr. Quillitt made no answer. Obviously there was none which he could make without declining upon the pitiable diplomatic expedient of telling the truth.

"Molloy," he said, after a few moments of discomfited pause, "you're too many for me, at diplomacy as well as at *écarté*. Look here, I'll make a clean breast of it," and he put his last official telegram into the Prime Minister's hand. "You see now," he continued eagerly, "why I want that treaty back again. It's a matter of life and death to my official future to recover and execute it on behalf of the British Government. And I'm sure, as an old friend, Molloy, you'll not stand in my way; even if," he added, with a keen glance at his companion, "even if you have at the moment some other political combination in your head."

Mr. Quillitt stopped for a moment to see whether this last remark of his would elicit any disclaimer. But, none coming, he resumed his solicitations with increased anxiety.

"See here, my dear fellow, here are my I.O.U.'s. Take them back again. No, no! You must! I insist!" exclaimed the Consul, as he almost forced them into the Prime Minister's palm. "And if a cheque for another two or even three hundred is necessary to arrange the business, it shall be forthcoming. But I *must* get that treaty back again, and execute it on behalf of my Government at once."

But still his Excellency made no sign. He was plunged in reflection so profound that Mr. Quillitt had time to get out his cheque-book in great agitation, and to insinuate between the statesman's fingers a cheque for a substantial sum before he roused himself from his reverie.

"Mister Quillutt," he then said, at the same time absently folding up the slip of paper which had been pressed upon him; "Mister Quillutt, I will do what I can for ye. But it's impossible for the treaty to be executed to-day."

"Impossible! Why?"

"I must consult his Majesty."

"Consult a rum-cask! Come, come, my dear Molloy. We are augurs of long enough standing to permit ourselves a ——"

"Enough, sorr!" interrupted the Minister, with dignity. "It's absolutely necessary to lay the matter before his Majesty. Come again to-morrow."

"But why not submit it to him to-day? The Palace is only a step from here," said the Consul, glancing through the window of the Minister's study at its sun-baked walls.

"His Majesty," said The O'Mara Molloy, "is not yet in a condition to grant me an audience. Herr Wolkenkopf attended at the Palace the day before yesterday to show the King a sample of some remarkably fine old Schnapps which he had just received from a relation at Amsterdam, and his Majesty, I understand, does not intend to resume official or ceremonial duties until to-morrow."

To this, of course, there was nothing to be said, and Mr. Quillitt accordingly

took his leave, in some disquietude of mind. Some hundred yards from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs he happened to turn round and look back—just in time to see a figure disappearing rapidly through its open door.

It was impossible to mistake those elegant proportions—M. de Chauvin!

A dark suspicion shot through the Consul's breast, and passing downwards like a charge of electricity rooted his feet to the earth. Could *this* be the explanation of the Minister's having so readily bought back the treaty? Could it be that he had another purchaser for it in his business-like eye? Was it possible that the hereditary enemy of the Saxon was about to strike a blow (for a consideration) at the secular oppressors of his race, and that, in plain prose, The O'Mara Molloy had been squared by the French?

Painfully revolving these agitating questions in his mind, Mr. Quillitt walked slowly homeward, to pass the most unquiet night that ever beat out its lagging hours in a sleepless brain. At noon next day he betook himself, in full official costume, to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, but only to find to his intense anxiety and even alarm that the Prime Minister was not to be seen. He had set off early in the morning, his private secretary said, by his Majesty's special command, to visit one of the distant islands of the group.

Mr. Quillitt now began to feel more and more convinced that he and probably Porcolongu were being sold. Having satisfied himself, however, that the private secretary had told him the truth, and that his Excellency had really departed on the alleged journey, he was fain to seek such reassurance as he could gather from the reflection that, unless the mischief was done already—a thought at which the spinal column of the Consul, from the cerebellum downwards, underwent the sensation commonly produced by the cold-water jet of the shampoer—no negotiation with M. de Chauvin could

take place till the Prime Minister's return.

A day passed; two, three, a week, and no Prime Minister. But instead thereof, another cipher telegram from Downing Street, which brought out a light dew of perspiration on Mr. Quillitt's brow. Thus it ran: "News received French ironclad left Noumea destined probably Porcolongu. Inform Foreign Office immediately whether treaty concluded." In desperation, Mr. Quillitt telegraphed back: "Negotiations still pending. Hope conclude treaty this week." This done, it occurred to him, as the only step he could take in The O'Mara Molloy's absence, that he might pay a visit to Herr Wolkenkopf, and after ascertaining whether he with his usually excellent information had heard anything of this reported French movement, endeavour to enlist his support in resisting the piratical policy of M. de Chauvin's Government.

He found the German Consul with his microscope before him, and his note-books around him, calmly arranging his specimens.

"Wolkenkopf, my good soul," said Quillitt, in that kindly but slightly patronising tone in which he was in the habit of addressing the dreamy *savant*; "what do you say to this report just transmitted to me from my Government?" And he read out the alarming telegram.

"What say I, mine friend?" said the Herr, looking placidly at him. "But what then should I say? You know better as I whether your Government true-speaks or not."

"Nonsense, Wolkenkopf; don't trifl with me. People can only be sure of speaking the truth when they know the truth, and our Government never knows anything. *You* know that."

"Do you not say we know everything in Berlin, dear Herr Consul?" said the German, beaming with mild satire through his spectacles. "And many people who know not everything know so much as you last said."

"Have you heard anything of this naval movement of the French from the sources of information from which you heard of their political designs? You still have access to those sources, I suppose?" asked Mr. Quillitt, sharply, for he was gradually getting to suspect everybody.

"Yes—well," replied Herr Wolkenkopf. "Through them, mine friend, I hear nothing. I believe not, so I may my own information trust, that any French ironclad is coming here at all."

"Ha!" exclaimed the British Consul, greatly relieved. "I am right glad to hear you say so; I hoped myself that the danger was not quite so imminent as that. But still, I think there *is* danger of a French annexation, don't you, Wolkenkopf? You won't undertake to say that my Government may lay aside its anxieties on that point, altogether? Eh?"

"No, dear Herr," said the man of science, carefully focusing a specimen while he applied his eye to the tube of his microscope. "No, dear Herr, I would not—go—quite—so far as that. I would not so—undertake to limit—"—here followed a rather long pause, during which the brass screw of the focusing gear revolved now forward now backward, through minute and ever-lessening arcs, between the naturalist's finger and thumb—"to limit"—and here he looked up with a sigh of relief at the successful conclusion of the delicate operation he had been engaged in—"the enterprising instincts of *la gr-r-r-rande nation*."

"Herr Wolkenkopf," said Mr. Quillitt gravely, "you are well aware that I share your suspicions. I am convinced that the Government of the French Republic entertain designs upon the independence of this group, which, unless a firm front is offered to them by the representatives of other European Powers, will very shortly be realised. May I—may I count upon your support in my endeavour to counteract them?"

Herr Wolkenkopf rose from his

chair, replaced his spectacles, which had been temporarily removed for microscopic purposes, on his nose, and gazing through them with a look of the greatest candour and benevolence that the human countenance is capable of expressing, replied, "Dear and respected colleague, I have always confided in your discretion, nor know I any reason why I should now conceal from you that the instructions I have from my Government received direct me to resist any French designs on the independence of Porcolonqu by every means in my power. I think I may assure you, dear Herr, that these islands will not be allowed, if it is any way possible for my Government to prevent it, to pass under the flag of the French Republic."

Mr. Quillitt was too delighted to reply in words. He could only grasp his German colleague's hand by way of answer; and he took his leave in a state of as high complacency as we may suppose to have suffused the mind of Sir William Temple after successfully negotiating the Triple Alliance.

Another day came and went without bringing home the truant Minister. On the evening, however, of the second day, Mr. Quillitt, whose house commanded a view of the landing-stage, and who accordingly seldom took his eyes from it, saw The O'Mara Molloy disembark from the Government yacht, which, in his capacity of First Lord of the Admiralty, he had placed at his own service as First Lord of the Treasury of Porcolonqu, and walk with rapid steps to his official residence.

"Good," muttered Mr. Quillitt to himself. "To-morrow, my friend, I bring you and your Royal master to book."

A couple of hours later another telegram reached him from the Foreign Office, thus conceived: "News despatch French ironclad confirmed. If treaty concluded communicate it French Consul, adding British Government cannot indifference view attack independence allied Sovereign."

"H'm," said the British Consul reflectively. "I'll conclude the treaty, if possible, the first thing to-morrow morning, and make my representations to De Chauvin immediately afterwards. If I don't succeed in concluding the treaty—if that Irish rascal, or the fuddled savage whom he serves and sells, is playing me false—well, I'll associate myself with Wolkenkopf, and we'll make a joint representation to the Frenchman."

Mr. Quillitt passed a quieter night than he had had for some time past, and rose betimes in excellent spirits. His bedroom window looked out on the bay, and as he gazed across its sunlit waters upon the lustrous expanse of ocean beyond, he felt a thrill of patriotic pride at the thought that it should have fallen to his lot to plant the British flag on a new point of vantage in that golden world. In the midst of these inspiring reflections Mr. Quillitt's eye fell upon a distant object in the offing. He started violently, and the hair-brush fell from his hand. Its place was instantly filled by a powerful binocular, which the Consul hastily brought to bear on the approaching vessel. Yes, there was no mistaking its squat and swarthy hull, its ungainly and forbidding lines. It was a powerful ironclad steaming rapidly towards the bay.

Mr. Quillitt was dressed in a twinkling, and half-way to the Prime Minister's house before he was five minutes older. As he skirted the little curve of shining sand which had to be traversed to reach it, two figures caught his eye—one that of M. de Chauvin striding rapidly in the direction of the Palace, the other that of Herr Wolkenkopf, in quite unofficial costume, a palm-leaf hat on his head and satchel at his side, dredging away as tranquilly as though there were no such things as international rivalries in the world.

Hurried as he was, the British Consul halted for a moment at the naturalist's elbow. "Look," he said, thrusting the binocular into the other's

hand, and pointing towards the ironclad.

Herr Wolkenkopf calmly inspected the approaching vessel, and returned the glass to its owner with the single monosyllable "Zo!"

"You will support me, Wolkenkopf," said Mr. Quillitt, pale but firm, "in protesting against this act of piracy on the part of France."

"Mine friend," replied the German quietly, "I promise you I will protest against anything of the kind. But where go you, dear Herr? To the Minister's? He is not to house. He is at the Palace with M. de Chauvin."

"At the Palace with M. de Chauvin! Then there is not a moment to be lost. Follow me, Wolkenkopf."

And hurrying across the court-yard, Mr. Quillitt sprang up the broad bamboo staircase three steps at a time, and dashed unceremoniously into the audience-chamber.

It was as he expected. M. de Chauvin and The O'Mara Molloy were seated at a table with an official-looking document, which the Consul recognised at a glance, before them. A treaty! with the royal sign-manual ("A week old, no doubt," thought Quillitt bitterly) at its foot, the Prime Minister's counter-signature opposite, and the ink still wet with which the Frenchman had just executed it.

"What means this intrusion, sorr?" said the Prime Minister, rising with dignity from his chair.

"You infernal swin—but stay, my first business is with you, M. de Chauvin. Ah! here is Wolkenkopf. In the name, Monsieur, of our respective Governments we protest against the act of piracy which—" He waved his hand towards the window, all eyes following it, but stopped dead in the tracks of his remonstrance. For the ironclad had hove to about a quarter of a mile from the shore. Up flew her colours to the peak, and loud ex-

clamations in English, French, and Irish broke simultaneously from three of the persons in the room.

IT WAS THE GERMAN FLAG!

The three ejaculators turned fiercely on their silent companion. Herr Wolkenkopf slowly drew a document from his pocket, and opened it before their eyes. All recognised at once the bold but simple signature "x Afseesova II., his mark." But the treaty was not countersigned by the Prime Minister.

"The King, sorr," exclaimed the descendant of kings, "has been guilty of a gross brach of the Constitution. Your threathy is not worth the paper ut's written on!"

"No?" said the Herr placidly. "But *that*," pointing through the window at the surly visitor in the bay. "That is worth much paper, and many writings. Not true?"

The Prime Minister and the British Consul owned to themselves that it was true. M. de Chauvin audibly attested his consciousness of its truth by execrating "the name of a cabbage."

"But," cried Mr. Quillitt, gradually recovering his senses, "how did you—? when did he—?"

"Mine friend," said the German, looking at him with benevolent humour in his mild blue eyes, "I took evening meal with his Majesty yesterday. The schnapps was *schön*, and—"

The O'Mara Molloy sprang forward and roughly plucked aside the curtain of rush matting which divided the audience-chamber from the throne-room. There on his back lay the monarch who, like Diocletian, Charles the Fifth, and other weary royal souls before him, had with his own hand divested himself of the burden of rule. At his side reposed three black bottles of a quaint shape. They were perfectly empty, but the legend on their labels showed that they had contained the finest Schiedam.

H. D. TRAILL.

NEW LAMPS FOR OLD ONES.

" Stands Scotland where it did ?
 Alas, poor country !
 Almost afraid to know itself."

To the unreflecting observer, and to the outside world at large, two characteristics, partly social, partly intellectual, seem to belong by virtue of a natural dispensation to an ancient University. To speak of it as the home of culture and enlightenment is to utter a sentiment of doubtful truth: but few doubt that it ought to be Conservative in its instincts, and that its management should be centred in the hands of weighty, grave, and reverend seniors. Oxford, for instance, is represented in Parliament by two admirable Conservatives, and no better mouthpiece, it is presumed, could be found for the solid and dignified interests of the academic world than Sir John Mowbray. Besides, the Chancellor, for whom Oxford invokes blessings in its ceremonial prayers, is the head of the Conservative party in England. And all this appears to be according to the natural fitness of things.

Such a view, however, would hardly commend itself to those who know something of the interior working of the University. It is true that the most recent specimens of youthful College Fellows have betrayed a remarkable tendency towards orthodoxy and Conservatism: but it is no less true that the resident members of Convocation (we do not speak of the non-resident clergy who hold Oxford degrees), can, four times out of five, carry liberal measures, and that the management of the Colleges is vested in men, if not young in years, at all events youthful in their feverish energy, and sometimes destructive ardour. The internal reform of Oxford has proceeded in recent years

with unabated vigour: the claims of science have been upheld by men whose own learning has been exclusively classical: and more especially, the whole system of examinations has been subjected to repeated change and reconstruction. As the Egyptian priests said to the Greeks, so may it be said to the Oxford reformers, " Ye are always children." Everywhere there is ferment and vacillation; old tests are sacrificed, and new educational expedients are introduced; no one examination stands where it did, but has adopted new forms; and the most recent edition of the Regulations of the Boards of Studies and Board of Faculties must be strange reading to Oxford men of twenty years ago. It becomes interesting to inquire in what relation the new education stands to the old, and to discover what modern acceptation is to be attached to the ancient designation of an Oxford scholar.

Putting aside Responsions—a sort of entrance examination, in which the only recent change has been the admission of an Oriental language as an equivalent for either Greek or Latin—the Oxford education is divided, roughly speaking, into two halves, the first of which ends with the First Public Examination, or "Modera-tions," and the second with the Second Public Examination, or "Greats." From the point of view of the old classical education, the first was intended to be a test of scholarship, the second a test of scholarship touched with culture—the last indefinite element being supplied by a study of Philosophy and History. Room has of course to be found for more modern

disciplines. In the course of a year or so there will be an elaborate system by which the First Public Examination will be divided into a series of preliminary schools in which the student of Science, or History, or Law may take up subjects bearing on his final studies without having his attention diverted by alien and perhaps uncongenial disciplines. But to this, as indicative of a general tendency towards Specialisation, we can return presently. The most notable change in recent years has been the so-called reform of Classical Moderations.

Perhaps the reformers were right when they said that the old Honour Moderations was but a school-boy test. Certain it is that undergraduates during the first year and a half of their residence wofully wasted their time, because they were only examined in the books which the best scholars had already studied at their schools. Instead, therefore, of eight prescribed books, the new arrangement consists of four books specially prepared, and a large number of passages set for translation from other authors which constitute what is called in the jargon of the University "unseens." The intention is obvious; it is to test scholarship, not merely hard work, by putting before the candidate Greek and Latin passages which he is to construe by the light of nature, or rather by means of his scholarly instinct. Only one examination has as yet taken place according to the newer model, so that it is perhaps early days to speak of its success or failure. But two remarks may be hazarded. Great faith is obviously put in "unseen translations" as a test of scholarship. Is the test altogether reliable? Perhaps schoolmasters might throw an unpleasant light on the matter if they could be induced to disclose the secrets of their craft, and surrender for a while their habitually pompous attitude as educational hierophants. Doubtless they know their business too well to do anything of the sort or even to whisper the fact (for fact it

undoubtedly is) that the power of translating at sight is a knack which to most boys of wit and shrewdness can be taught with the same facility as swimming or racquets. Let us assume that only half of the scholars sent up from schools have learnt this knack, and the value of the "unseen" test becomes seriously impaired. There is another point of view which is perhaps more important. We can understand that first-class men will make the best of the new system and enjoy a course of promiscuous reading in Greek and Latin authors; but what of the second class and the third? Can they be encouraged to study let us say Demosthenes' Private Orations in the faint hope of getting a piece of the Athenian orator to translate? Will not the tendency be towards reading only their four prepared books (instead of the eight which used to be prescribed) and so becoming more idle than ever? In all academic reforms the standard of measurement is fixed too often by the first-class man. Undoubtedly he should be helped by the suggestion of higher aims, but then the first-class man will always get the best out of any system. Meanwhile the seconds and thirds, who after all form the majority, go to the wall to make room for their more fortunate brothers whom Nature has already helped, and whom the University is inclined to help still more.

These, however, let us grant, are but surmises: by getting down to underlying principles we move on surer ground. Let us attempt to sketch the older type of scholar, and set by his side his more modern representative. An Oxford scholar (such as visit their descendants at a College *Gaude*, and make long speeches after dinner) was a man of scholarly instincts and tastes rather than of positive acquisitions. With some authors he probably had little or no acquaintance, but he knew his Virgil and his Horace, his Homer and his Sophocles in such fashion that they had entered into his life. Of science he had none;

of classical Philology, as a science, he had hardly heard. But he had the most marvellous aptitude for quotation, and he had most of his authors off by heart. He believed that Latin and Greek was not only an intellectual but also a social discipline; it helped to make gentlemen. And, in truth, his knowledge, such as it was, had interpenetrated his nature. He could usually write in classical languages with facility; he had a pretty turn for elegiacs and iambics; and above all, he had a delicate and exquisite sensitiveness for all the lights and shadows of classical style, and, aided by much common sense, instinctively felt the meaning of his author. He did not, perhaps, know much, but he made admirable use of what he knew; he had a genius for style, and a keen ear for rhythm. The modern scholar is not run in this mould. He is an Original Researcher. He has enormous erudition, for he believes that scholarship means knowledge, and knowledge only. Is not the German word for scholar, *gelehrte*, the French, *savant*? A scholar is one who burrows in the ancient literature with the instincts of a mole; who adds to his Latin and Greek a knowledge of Sanskrit as an indispensable auxiliary, and does his best to convert Philology into an exact science. He looks for his information to other sources than did his elder prototype. He knows the value of Inscriptions and Monumentary Evidence, and studies manuscripts of foreign libraries. Is anything lost in such a change? Perhaps two things; common sense, and culture. Certainly the ponderous notes which the modern scholar produces on ancient texts are not remarkable for their common sense. They labour under the load of their erudition, and very often darken knowledge without counsel. And culture? Well, in one sense, culture may only mean a faculty for intellectual digestion and a determined acquisitiveness; in another sense, it means much more. It means assimilation, self-adaptation, taste; it is the

mental reaction which succeeds the acquisition of new materials; it is the insight, the mastery of one who not only learns, but thinks; it is more than mental, for it becomes almost a moral attribute, and an ingredient in character. If this be lost, is education worth the having?

"Specialisation" is a watchword of the advanced school of educational reform. As applied to a University, it means that all the cleverer undergraduates are to be encouraged to limit and to concentrate, to circumscribe the range of their studies, and isolate some particular discipline to which they propose to devote the industry of a life-time. The fault of the older education—so it is alleged—was its general character, its diffuseness. Like the teaching of the ancient Sophists, it proposed to cover a large amount of ground, and to do it at the expense of thoroughness. Better to know one subject well than to have a superficial acquaintance with a dozen; the *homo unius libri*, the master of one book, is the master of the field. In pursuance of this aim, the reformers have lately been constructing a most elaborate programme, whereby each student is to differentiate himself from the earliest available moment of his residence in the University. Instead of the old Moderations, there are to be a series of special preliminary schools—a school for Law, a school for Modern History, a school for Theology, a reformed school for the final examination in Classics, just as there is already a preliminary school for Science. The details of the scheme, although they assuredly lay themselves open to criticism, are not so important here as the general principle. Every student is to find his particular study, when he has once passed the elementary test of Responses, and to devote thereto his three years of residence. He will have every help rendered in the pursuance of his aims; he will have first to pass a preliminary test before finally undergoing the ex-

amination which is to give him a degree. Let all praise be given to those ardent devotees of a special field of study who have now found the joy and satisfaction of a congenial pursuit, and who read back their experience when they are thirty into the comparatively immature age of nineteen and twenty. The difficulty is for the youthful student to find his special field. The older specialist has found his, after a general course of learning wherein he has by experience discovered his strength and his weakness—an experience which, however bitter, has put him on a platform whence he can survey the promised land and choose his especial portion. But what experience has the youthful scholar? Is he to be left to mistake his ardent visions for a definite intellectual tendency? Are there no chances of a possible miscalculation of force? Or is it not rather true that it is safest and wisest to have a general culture of faculty first, before the special choice is made? We bewail the sad necessity which so often forces a man in practical life to choose his career at a time when through age and inexperience he has least chance of choosing wisely, and yet in this case where circumstances are favourable, where there exists an intellectual hothouse in which the young plants may be fostered in their intellectual career, we deliberately throw away the advantages of this artificial atmosphere, and compel the young shoots to be grafted on possibly alien stocks. Perhaps specialisation itself may not be an unmixed benefit to the mind; perhaps even it may be a confession of weakness, from which the greatest intellects, as history has so often shown, have been free. But specialisation at twenty lessens the chances which aid a man at thirty.

It is especially in reference to the final Classical School that specialisation seems a perverse tendency. The school, known as Greats, may not be perfect; but it has been highly characteristic. The slow growth of time and circumstance has given this final

test a peculiar significance in the annals of Oxford. It is, in simple language, an examination in ancient culture as prophetic of modern. A certain amount of ancient philosophy, a certain amount of ancient history, have been studied partly in themselves, partly in their relations to modern history and philosophy. Vague, general and superficial, the knowledge so accumulated may have been; but it was, at least, a test of mental receptivity and openness to all sorts of influences. And the man who has gone through the test has often been the first to declare how valuable a mental discipline it has proved. He has been given the inestimable benefit of an open mind, not destitute of such graces of culture as the study of ancient civilisation can impart. He is now ready for the battle of life, wherein he has to choose his side. Concentration, no doubt, he now finds to his advantage; but it is because he has had a sort of general training. He has acquired mental flexibility and adaptiveness, and he finds them no small boon. It is matter of common notoriety that the man who has got his first in Greats can get a first in any school he pleases. He has tasted blood, and his intellectual appetite is keen.

Now here the modern cry is for a division into at least three final schools—Classics, Philosophy, and History. There has been enough tinkering, in all conscience, at the final school. But yet the examination has retained these three elements in fusion. Certainly such fusion has promoted the interests of mental culture, but culture is an offensive, and possibly a meaningless, term to the modern reformer. Assuredly some students have a taste for one subject in preference to another; one man does well in History, and another does well in Philosophy. Yet examiners have had no particular difficulty in assigning their classes; if difficulty there has been, it has been mostly in reference to the particular standard to be adopted, and the

dividing lines to be drawn between first class and second, second class and third. Very few men indeed get a first, let us say, in Philosophy, and a third in History. Meanwhile the value of a general study of ancient civilisation has been inestimable, and the habits of mental discipline involved in the preparation for such a test have been found to be most helpful in a future career. It is a great thing to turn a man out well equipped. Let him, after he has gained his degree, choose his line. To make him choose before his degree may make him a narrow, abstract, one-sided pedant.

It is a somewhat significant fact that in the latest authoritative edition of the Examination Statutes, the regulations relating to Science occupy forty-four pages out of one hundred and fifty—nearly one-third of the whole volume. For Science is the type to which all education is to be forced to conform. Perhaps the letters M.Ch. form a novelty for some readers, as indicative of an Oxford degree. It means a Master of Surgery, and the degree can be taken by a Bachelor of Surgery or a Bachelor of Medicine in the twenty-seventh term from matriculation, after passing a special examination in Surgical Operations and Surgical Anatomy. The advance of Science in Oxford in recent years has been extraordinary, both in material resources and mental discipline. Very large sums have been expended on the erection and furnishing of Laboratories, and the handsome building for Physiological study, and the hideous barn for Anthropological collections are the latest architectural achievements in the University. The aim of the Scientist has been two-fold. He desires, in the first place (sharing the aspirations of the advanced school of reformers generally in this respect), to get rid of much of that necessity for residence which was thought so valuable a part of the old Oxford training ; and in the second place, he labours without ceasing to enable the scientific student to get through his academic

course without learning an ancient language. Some modern substitute—either French or German—is to be found for Latin and Greek, so that a man who intends to take a scientific degree need waste no time over the unprofitable study of the uses of *à* or the meaning of *qui* with the subjunctive. He has not as yet gained his point ; but he is not without hopes of ultimate success ; and the Scientist is a pushing creature.

Far be it from us to deny the advantages, or even the necessities, of a scientific education, which has now so largely found its way into the curriculum of public schools. The arguments hitherto adopted have not, it is true, been peculiarly dignified, for they have been based chiefly on the example of Cambridge. Cambridge makes it easier for scientific men to pass through its course of training ; Cambridge has a larger number of scientific students on its books ; therefore, by all means, let Oxford follow. Perhaps this is only brotherly rivalry ; perhaps it is an unbecoming mimicry. Yet, after all, despite its efforts, Science in Oxford is not so successfully taught as in the American scientific schools, and the natural deduction to be drawn is not that it ought in consequence to have larger opportunities allowed it in comparison with the classical education, but rather that the Oxford soil is not wholly congenial to this modern growth. If it were not too paradoxical an assertion to make in this modern age, we should feel sometimes tempted to declare that Science can have its Nottingham, its Leeds, its Manchester, its Liverpool, its London, if it will only leave Oxford alone. Is this too illiberal and reactionary ? In one sense it is, for scientific teaching has gone hand in hand with that extension of the University teaching throughout England and that system of affiliated colleges, which have formed one of the best and most hopeful signs of modern education. If such an admirable mode of "making our Universities useful "

really involves a large development of Science, we can only resign ourselves to the necessity, and grant our scientific professors the enormous sums which they often so unblushingly demand. Yet an old weather-beaten system of classical culture is so precious a relic of time and scholarly habit, Oxford, "whispering from her towers the last enchantments of the Middle Age," has so powerful a hold on the imagination, that we would fain not see the ancient edifice roughly and discourteously treated. It is not easy to build up a new system, and it is very easy to destroy an old one. Has the University no mission in the present day unless it includes Science in its training? Surely a more important duty than ever, the more imperative need there is for some corrective to modern tendencies. Never, we might say, has there been so great need for the old preaching of modesty and harmony (*áppovía*) and self-cultivation, which in some wonderful way the ancient Classics can impart, as in the days in which Science is always striving and crying, and Practical

Utility lifting up its voice in our streets. The old gifts of taste and literary culture would indeed be a boon to some of the modern reformers. There is a story which is very likely apocryphal, but which is, unfortunately, so characteristic that it may be held to be *ben trovato*. When the new Physiological Laboratory was built, the question arose as to the decorative emblems to be placed on its walls. The old Oxford motto, *Dominus Illuminatio Mea*, was deliberately rejected in order that some motto more indicative of modern discipline might be substituted. So curious a want of historic feeling and literary taste is no very lovable sign of the times. The scientists may, we suppose, do what they like with their own, and, if they please, write *Scientia et Virisectio sua* on their walls. But it makes one wonder whether, in the modern barter of old lamps for new ones, there may disappear along with the ancient vessel the subtle power of evoking the ancient Genius.

W. L. COURTNEY.

THE POETRY OF THE SPANISH PEOPLE.

EVEN a casual traveller passing through Spain, and more especially Andalusia, cannot fail to notice the strange quavering chant which, with little variation in tune, and constant variation in words, is for ever on the lips of the people. The muleteer driving his team across the Sierra, the cigarette-girl in the factory, the beggar on the street,—all have the same love of singing, and all appear to possess in a greater or less degree the remarkable aptitude of improvising words for their songs.

Although many of the verses thus improvised melt away the moment they fall from the singer's lips, and are forgotten with the occasion that called them forth, there are moments of inspiration in which some singer, more gifted than his fellows, may turn a couplet so aptly rhymed, so witty, or so pathetic, that it impresses itself on the memory of its author, who sings it again and again, till his companions also have learned to sing it; and till, passed from mouth to mouth, it travels so far that all trace of its authorship is forgotten, and it becomes the traditional property of the people. By this process of survival of the fittest a vast literature of popular lyric poetry has been formed—a literature which time changes as rapidly as it does the seashore, daily washing up fresh deposits, and daily washing the old away.

It would be strange if a phenomenon so remarkable as this had passed by unobserved in this age of observation and travel. There have been many attempts during the present century to collect this traditional poetry in Spain; and among those who have turned their attention to the work, are names as eminent in literature as Lafuente, and "Fernan Caballero," that lady who has painted the Spanish peasantry with such art and sympathy in her well-known romances. But it

was not till the year 1882 that anything like an exhaustive collection was made, when Don Rodriguez Marin, himself a poet of considerable talent, undertook the task of systematically collecting the whole of this traditional poetry from the lips of the people themselves.

The peculiar characteristic of popular Spanish poetry is that it consists entirely of detached stanzas, each containing in itself a complete poetical sentiment; and although a number of these may be sung in rapid succession without any alteration of tune, they have no bearing on each other, the singer selecting at random such as occur to him at the moment. Those stanzas generally take one of two forms, the couplet, *copla*, or the *seguidilla*. The couplet consists of four octosyllabic lines, the second and fourth of which rhyme. The *seguidilla* is a couplet with other three lines called the *estribillo* tacked on to the end of it.

Although the couplet is the simplest form of verse, the *seguidilla* is said to be the oldest. According to tradition it was invented in La Mancha in the sixteenth century, and Cervantes alludes to it in 'Don Quixote.' The *seguidillas*, like the old "ballads," were originally meant as accompaniments to dancing, and as such they are still used in Spain. The poetry of the Spanish people is so closely wedded to the national dances, that in order to fully appreciate it, one must see a gala night among the peasantry in some country village where old traditions still remain unpolluted. It is the evening of a wedding-day, or a feast-day perhaps, and a company of merry-makers has assembled in one of those low-roofed rooms whose scanty furniture and walls, bare except for a few prints

of saints, give it the appearance of being far larger than it actually is. The spectators have seated themselves round the walls; the guitar-player, cigarette in mouth, has taken up a prominent position; and the best voices have been told off to sing the *seguidillas*. It is then that a young man and woman, dressed in the picturesque costume that is so fast disappearing now, step into the centre of the room and take up positions facing each other at a couple of yards distance. The music strikes up, and after a short prelude on the guitar the singing and dancing commence. The dance is free from all violent movements. It consists rather of a graceful swaying of the body and arms than of complicated steps. So small a part do the feet play that the dancers seem scarcely to lift them from the ground, and never quit the spot where they first took up their position except twice in each figure; once in the middle, when by a graceful step they change places; and again towards the end, when they resume their former positions. The time is well marked, and the dancers generally accompany themselves with castanets. The audience also mark time with castanets, or by clapping their hands. At the end of each figure, music, dancing, and castanets come to a sudden stop. For a moment dead silence reigns; and the two dancers, thrown into strikingly graceful postures, remain immovable, as though some magic spell had at once silenced the music and transformed the dancers to marble. A graceful stop, *bien jardado*, is the crucial test of a *bolero* dancer, and when successfully accomplished the audience will break into loud applause, and repeated cries of *Olle! Olle!* will greet the performers.

Such is the dance to which those verses are sung as accompaniments. Most of them have for their theme the old story of tender or unrequited love; and if they do not always tell it with depth of feeling, they seldom want some trace of that ready wit

which Spaniards even of the humblest class can always command.

Par las cinco ventanas
De mis sentidas
Te entrastes en mi pecho
Sin ser sentido :
Pero has de advertir
Que sin sin sentir no puedes
Volver á salir.

By my senses' windows five
Thou crept in one day
Ere I knew it, to my heart
Thou hadst found thy way :
Now 'tis past all doubt
That without my knowing it
Thou shalt not creep out.

Lo mismo que la sombra
Son las mujeres
Huyen del que las sigue,
Al que huye quieren :
Y de aqui nace
Que quedan muchas veces
Sin colocarse.

Like unto a shadow
Women seem to be,
They fly you when you follow,
And follow when you flee :
And this the reason why
Some that will not settle
Are just left to fly.

Notwithstanding the enthusiastic assurances of Don Preciso, one of the first collectors of *seguidillas*, it is difficult to believe that all those included in his collection are of genuinely popular origin. In lowly society all may indeed have circulated, but there are many whose style betrays a noble birth at least.

Es amor en la ausencia
Como la sombra,
Que cuanto más se aleja,
Mas cuerpo toma :
La ausencia es aire,
Que apaga el fuego chico
Y aviva el grande.

Absence is the light, and love
The shadow that it throws,
The further from the light we move
The more the shadow grows :

Absence is the blast that blows,
The feeble flame it quenches ;
The strong still fiercer glows.

Pensamiento que vuelas
Mas que las aves,
Llévalo ese suspiro
A quien tu sabes :
Y dile á mi amor
Que tengo su retrato
En mi corazon.

Thought, that hast wings and can fly
 Swift as a bird through the air,
 Bear on thy bosom this sigh,
 Carry it thou knowest where :
 My lady to tell
 That her image alone
 In my bosom shall dwell.

Moreover the *seguidilla* is difficult to compose. Apart from the multiplication of rhymes, the unity of thought must be maintained up to the very end, otherwise the *estrevillo* in time gets detached and lost. Many of those which are complete in the early collections have been found by later collectors circulating amongst the people without any *estrevillo*. So much is this the case that the bulk of the *seguidillas* at present sung to accompany dancing are really *coplas*; the place of the *estrevillo* being supplied by some movable and more or less meaningless chorus, or by a mere repetition of the last three lines.

The four-lined couplet, or *copla*, is the real vehicle of popular poetry. Its measure is simple, and only the second and fourth lines rhyme—a matter rendered easy both by the richness of the Spanish language, and by the admission of those consonant or vowel rhymes, which characterise the old Spanish romances, and originated in the poetry of the East.

Whenever any incident occurs to break the monotony of his every-day life, the Spaniard will turn a *copla* to commemorate it. Sometimes the incident is trivial enough. "It is impossible to take a walk through Seville at present," says Señor Machado, "without hearing sung at every turn in all the lanes and courts, as well as in the music-halls and dancing saloons, the unedifying jingle of the *corruco*, a sort of novel sweetmeat of peculiar form and confection, which has produced a perfect literary epidemic in the town."

Political events are always fruitful in couples. Thus :

Los zapatos tengo rotos
 De subir á la azotea
 Por ver si veo pasar
 Al valiente Salvochea ;

With climbing to the roof I've worn
 The boots from off my feet,
 To see if brave Salvochea
 Goes passing up the street,

is one of many which contains an allusion to the cantonal movement. If these were collected they would form a faithful chronicle of all the events, political or domestic, serious or trivial, which have at any time impressed themselves on the mind of the people. But such a collection could never be made, for the couplets that are engendered by passing events are destined to oblivion as soon as the excitement occasioned by the event has subsided. In a few exceptional cases they may survive. Señor Marin's collection contains one or two which allude to events that took place in the fifteenth century; but these are so rare, and the events alluded to so memorable, that even they have probably been composed in more recent times.

But if the popular poetry does not afford a record of the political history of the Spanish people, it forms a most valuable page in their social history. Señor Marin has collected his materials among all sorts and conditions of men; not only from the labourers in the olive-yards and the soldiers in the barracks, but even from the lips of the prisoners in their cells. We have thus a complete picture of prison-life from the most important of all aspects—the prisoners' own point of view. Many of the prison couplets are not only interesting as a social study, but of considerable pathos.

A los doce de la noche,
 Niña, me llevaron preso,
 Y para mayor dolor,
 Meataron con tu pañuelo.

They've dragged me to a prison cell.
 At midnight, when they found me,
 I wore thy kerchief, love, and ah !
 It was with it they bound me.

The Spanish brigand is now almost if not altogether extinct. Yet it is not so long since Jose Maria, of whose dash and gallantry Prosperé Merimée gives so graphic an account, was at once the terror and the admiration of

Spain ; and popular poetry continues to bear testimony to the roving boldness and romance of brigand life.

En montando en mi caballo
No terreo á ningun valiente :
Un retaco, dos pistolas,
Un cuchillo, y venga genta !

When mounted on my charger
I fearless ride my way :
A carbine, two pistols,
A dirk, and come who may !

More interesting still as a record of old customs are the student's couplets. Modern tendencies, which have altered so much in Spain, have not spared that most Spanish of all institutions—the student-life. The students of to-day have lost all the romance that once marked them out as a race apart. Their quaint old customs have fallen into disuse ; their picturesque dresses have been discarded. But although the Salamanca of Gil Blas is now gone, it lived on to within touch of our own times. There are grey-headed Spaniards still who can tell with regret of the good old days when, after the Academical session was over, the students set off in parties to wander from village to village, trusting for a livelihood to nothing but their guitars, their ready wit, and the inexhaustible good nature of their countrymen. The arrival of those merry bands at a village was hailed with delight by both old and young, but by none more than the girls, who, according to the testimony of the couplets that now remain the sole epitaphs of those rollicking days, were bound to have a student for their first love, notwithstanding the suspicion with which such attachments were regarded by their mothers, whose views, if less romantic, were more practical.

Si el amo del estudiante
Fuera cosa permanente
No hubiera nada en el mundo
Que fuera tan excelente.

Ah yes, the student's love, my child,
By none could be surpassed ;
'Twould be the best in all the world—
If only it would last.

And, indeed, it is probable that the mothers gauged the sincerity of their daughters' suitors better than the daughters did themselves ; for it is hunger, and not love, that is the constant theme of the students' verses. None of them allude to a broken heart, but almost all of them to an empty stomach. Even when a lady on the balcony is being serenaded, the demands of an insatiable appetite insist on forcing themselves in and jeopardising the romance of the situation.

Señorita del balcon
Diga le usté á su papa
Que nos eche medio duro
Para esta noche cenar.

Gentle lady on the balcony,
Pity on our wretched plight.
Pray throw down but half a dollar
To buy supper for to-night.

A couplet is essentially the expression of a sentiment. But if it is to be anything more than ephemeral, if it is to survive the moment of its birth and become a traditional possession of the people, it must not only express a sentiment, but a sentiment experienced often and by many. All those of which we have hitherto been speaking are by the nature of their subjects limited to certain classes—prisoners, soldiers, or students. Hence they are few in number ; but there are sentiments common to all classes of men, such as love and religion, and we may therefore expect to find these inspiring a large number of couplets. Señor Marin's collection shows this to be the case. Taking the contents of the five volumes of which it consists, and eliminating the riddles and children's rhymes (which, however, occupy but a small space) we find that three out of every four have love for their theme.

For lyric poetry no subject can be better suited than this, and it is in the verses which treat of love that the truest poetry is found. Every possible incident in the course of a love-story has its own couplet. Every phase of the passion, from its dawn-

ing to its final issue, is reflected in a verse. The result is a many-volumed novel—the love-story of a whole nation.

The first awakening of that passion which "leaves father and mother" has seldom been expressed with more simple poetry than this :

Dos besos tengo en el alma
Que no se apartan de mí :
El ultimo de mi madre,
Yel primero que te di.

Deep in my soul two kisses rest,
Forgot they ne'er shall be :
The last my mother's lips impressed,
The first I stole from thee.

Then we have the lover sighing like a furnace :

Sospiros que de mí salgan.
Y otros que de ti saldrán
Si en el camino se encontran
Qué de cosas se dirán !

If all the sighs thy lips now shape
Could meet upon the way
With those that from mine own escape,
What things they'd have to say !

And again we have the ripples in that course that never will run smooth. The hated conscription parts the lovers.

Soldado soy, qué remedio ?
Así lo quiso mi suerte,
Y no me pesa el fusil,
Pero si dejar de verte.

A soldier's lot I do not dread
If such my fate's decree,
'Tis not my musket weighs me down,
'Tis parting, love, from thee.

Or perhaps bodings of infidelity throw their shadows between them.

Tú eres mi primer amor,
Tu me enseñaste á querer :
No me enseñes á olvidar,
Que no lo quiera aprender.

My true love first in thee I met,
Thou taught'st me to adore ;
Oh, do not teach me to forget,
I seek no lesson more.

And sometimes the worst fears are realised, and we have the passionate cry of the woman who has been seduced and abandoned, and yet who does not mourn her misery and her shame more

than she regrets the loss of him who has wrought it:

Por tí me olvidé de Dios
Por tí la gloria perdí,
Y ahora me voy á quedar
Sin Dios, sin gloria y sin ti.

For thee my God I dared to scorn ;
My fame thou stol'st from me ;
And now, alas, I'm left to mourn
My God, my fame, and thee.

A large number of the love couplets fall under the head of what is known as *requiebros*, or compliments (literally "smashes"). In Spain this art of turning a compliment reaches its greatest perfection, strangely enough, not amongst the polished society of the court, but among the humble classes. Female beauty is felt by them to contrast so strongly with their own roughness, that they regard it with a feeling amounting almost to worship. The beautiful Duchess of Devonshire used to say that every compliment paid her was insipid after the dustman's who asked leave to light his pipe at her grace's eyes. Such wit is rarely found in this country in so lowly a quarter; but the dustman's compliment is a perfect example of a Spanish *requiebro*, such as any beautiful woman passing down the street of a Spanish town would be frequently greeted with. The *requiebros* expressed in poetry and sung in the serenades are therefore not only numerous but often extremely happy.

Salga el sol, si ha de salir,
Y si no, que nunca salga ;
Que para alun-brarme á mí
La luz de tus ojos basta.

If the sun care to rise, let him rise,
And if not, let him ever lie hid ;
For the light from my lady-love's eyes
Shines forth as the sun never did.

The whiteness of their mistress's skin has been an endless theme to cultivated poets of all nations, but rarely has it been more prettily sung than here :

La nieve por tu cara
Pasó diciendo :
En donde no haya falta
No me detengo.

Before thy brow the snow-flakes
Hurry past and say—
“Where we are not needed
Wherefore should we stay?”

Yet, prominent as is the part played by compliment, it must yield to jealousy. This passion inspires upwards of a thousand couplets in the collection we have already referred to. The Spaniard will never consent “to leave a corner in the heart he loves for other’s use.” He is for ever vowing that he would rather see his mistress dead than possessed by another; and the threat to find a grave for his rival beneath her window is one which unhappily too often goes beyond mere singing.

Love will continue to be the ruling theme of Spanish popular poetry so long as the romantic custom of serenading remains in vogue. This custom, so characteristic of the country, owes its maintenance, if not its origin, to the strictness with which young people of different sexes are kept apart. The Spaniards are in this respect an extremely prudish race, and the common people even more so than the higher grades of society. When a girl in humble life has found a suitor he is not admitted to the house to pay his court. Only on rare occasions, and under due escort, is he allowed to walk with her. But there is one place where he is always permitted to see and talk to her alone—at her window or balcony. Beneath this he is ever to be found standing in the long cool summer evenings, after the day’s work is over, talking and singing till the last peal of the evening bells has died away, and the stars have mustered to their watch in the cloudless sky overhead. And then, perhaps, after he has parted with his betrothed and her casement is closed for the night, he will return with a band of his companions and serenade her with his verses to the accompaniment of their guitars, a service which he has to render again as the little band visits in turn the windows of each of their sweethearts.

It is during those serenades that fresh couplets are inspired and the old ones repeated; and since it is as rare to find any one who can write and read among the common people in Spain as it is to find one who cannot do so in England, it is only by repetition that they can be circulated. But repetition and inspiration are dangerous companions. The man who is capable of improvising a song for himself can seldom be trusted to faithfully reproduce one composed by another. Each singer is apt to throw some of his own personality into the repetition, and reproduce not so much the original words as the sentiment they have inspired in him. Hence there is a large number of variants of all the most popular couplets; and the number of versions through which any one has passed may be taken as a fair enough index of its popularity.

If we wished to gauge the poetical talent of any individual singer, we could not find a more certain means of doing so than by observing what variations he made on a song that he repeated, and considering whether his edition was an improvement of the original or the reverse. In the same way we might form some estimate of the poetical talent of the Spanish people, if we could observe what variations they would make on a verse which had found its way in amongst them from some known external source. Such a test can actually be applied; for the composition of *coplas* has been resorted to not unfrequently by cultured poets in recent times, and it sometimes happens, when one of these has been peculiarly happy in catching the spirit of the popular muse, that it finds a place for itself along with the genuine productions of the people. Rarely however can an aristocratic interloper of this sort pass unchallenged. It is likely to contain some feature which is unintelligible, or at any rate would not come naturally to an illiterate composer, and which is sure to be modified as the verse passes

from mouth to mouth. It is remarkable that those alterations are in most cases distinct improvements, and argue a keen sense of that poetical feeling which is born and not made. Thus the following couplet by Señor Aguilera :—

El dia que tu naciste
Cayó un pedazo de cielo,
Cuando mueres y allá subas
Se tapará el agujero ;

The day that thou wert born, my love,
A piece from Heaven dropped,
And when thou'rt dead and mount again,
Then will the gap be stopped—

has been found circulating in this altered form :

El dia que tu naciste
Cayó un pedazo de cielo,
Hasta que tu no te mueras
No se tapa el agujero.

The day that thou wert born, my love,
A piece from Heaven dropped,
And not before thou'rt dead, my love,
Can yonder gap be stopped.

Although the distinction cannot be well brought out in a translation, if the originals be compared, it can hardly be a matter of dispute that the popular version is an improvement on the original.

Next in interest to the love couplets, though far less numerous, are those of religion. Religion has been so powerful a factor in the formation of Spanish literature in its most brilliant era that one feels curious to see what part it plays in modern popular poetry. But the noble sense of religion which was kept alive by eight centuries of warfare against an infidel invader differs widely from the bigoted superstition which alone seems to have survived the Inquisition. The Spanish people draw their ideas of sacred things mainly from the images which abound in their churches, and are paraded through the streets in Holy Week. Their conceptions are thus more material than spiritual. The Virgin, who is the most prominent figure in their theogony, is worshipped under various personalities, depending on her various func-

tions, such as the Virgin of Peace, or the Virgin of Succour; or even on some favoured locality, as Ephesus used to be in the case of Diana. So distinct are those different personalities in the popular mind, that in some small villages the Virgin of Succour will have her special adherents who are so jealous of those of the Virgin of Peace, that when the rival processions encounter each other in the street during Holy Week, clubs and knives are not unfrequently resorted to to settle the controversy. The conception of God is correspondingly anthropomorphic. The consequence of this is that His name is mentioned and His personality introduced in an easy and familiar way, which to us appears nothing short of blasphemous, although no blasphemy is intended. "More valiant than God," is a complimentary epithet of the commonest occurrence; while the invariable formula in which prophecies on the weather are expressed is, that if certain phenomena present themselves, "it will rain even though God tries to prevent it."

The bulk of the religious couplets is made up of the *saetas*, or verses of greeting, sung to the processions as they pass through the streets in Holy Week. Even in a large town like Seville it is rarely that a procession is allowed to file through the densely thronged Plaza de la Constitucion without some voice from amongst the crowd of spectators breaking the silence by chanting a verse in praise of the saint whose image is being borne along. The *saetas* do not express any religious sentiment, and are entitled to be classed as religious only because they allude to holy beings. Generally they consist of pictures in miniature of the Holy Family.

La Virgen lava la ropa
San José la está tendiendo
Santa Ana entretiene al Niño
Y el agua se va riendo.

The Virgin is washing the clothes at the brook,
And Saint Joseph hangs them to dry.
Saint Ana plays with the Holy Babe,
And the water flows smiling by.

Lo ha dormido entre sus brazos
Aquella que lo parió
Y su canto era tan dulce
Que pudo dormir á Dios.

Folded in his mother's arms
Lulled to sleep the Baby lay.
Even God could not resist
The sweetness of that lullaby.

It must be admitted that such pictures as these are entirely wanting in religious dignity. They conceive the Virgin and St. Joseph and the Infant Jesus as little different from Spanish peasants, but they paint their conception, such as it is, with no common degree of beauty. The pictures of Murillo, who, if not the greatest Spanish painter, is certainly the most popular, are characterised by the same excellence and the same defect. No one can look upon his Madonnas without being struck by their simple beauty; and yet, after all, they are but beautiful women beautifully painted. The Madonnas of Raphael, on the other hand, are hardly women at all. They are embodiments of religious passion. It would be desecration to regard them with the same sort of admiration that we bestow on those of the Spanish artist.

There are a few couplets which, though they do not specially allude to religious beings, are perhaps more entitled to be called religious than the *saietas*. They express those deep yet vague sentiments of religion that are awakened at times even in the most ignorant peasant when Nature unveils herself to him in all her mysterious grandeur, and, disturbed "with the joy of solemn thoughts," he tries in his own rude way to express the strange feeling that has taken possession of him.

Yo no sé lo que me pasa
No tampoco lo que quiero :
Digo y no sé lo que digo,
Siento y no sé lo que siento.

I wist not what has come o'er me,
I long for I know not what,
I speak, but scarce know that I'm speaking,
I think, but I know not my thought.

Here we recognise that vague

mysticism which pervades eastern religion ; and indeed all the popular Spanish poetry is marked by features which it holds in common with the poetry of the East. A vein of melancholy runs through it, which is characteristic of over-sensitive natures, and hyperbole is far more common than in the poetry of any western race. In all this we trace a legacy of the Moors; and, indeed, when we consider that the Moorish occupation of Spain covered a period greater than that which has elapsed from the Norman conquest to our own times, and that it has left an indelible impression on the language, the architecture, the manners and customs of the Spanish people, it is but little wonder that it should also have saturated their poetry. Not only has Spanish popular poetry been moulded under the influence of Moorish taste, but had it not been for the Moors, it probably would never have existed. For it is remarkable that the south of Spain, where the Moorish power was first established and where it lingered longest, affords the richest harvest of this poetry. In Morocco, too, at the present day, the Moors evince the same love of singing and power of improvisation that was brought over by their ancestors who fled with Boabdil from the Alhambra ; and many of the verses of their popular songs might almost pass for translations of some of the Spanish couplets, pointing unmistakably to a common origin. No one who has travelled in Morocco can fail to be struck with the likeness between the Moorish and Spanish popular singing, not only in the words of the songs themselves, but in the character of the music and the accompaniment. It is only then that one realises to the full the truth of the saying, that "Africa begins at the Pyrenees."

The work which is being done by collectors like Don Rodriguez Marin is work of the highest value. It is for want of such that the most of our old English labour-songs have been

lost. Mr. Carmichael, in his report to the Crofter Commission, tells us how the Scottish Highlanders in by-gone times had songs of love, and war, and hunting, and labour with which they accompanied themselves when rowing, shearing, spinning, milking, or grinding at the quern. The spread of education and the effacing hand of progress have wiped out all but the merest traces of them. But in Spain it is different. She is the Rip van Winkle of the European nations. With all her old traditions she has slumbered on through centuries. But for good or for evil the hand of progress is now laid upon her, and she will waken to forget them all as other

nations have forgotten them. It is only by recording those couplets now that we can save them from oblivion, and then, unlike the Moor whom Washington Irving found by the fountain in the Alhambra, we shall not have to regret so bitterly the times when "they thought only of love and music and poetry. They made stanzas on every occasion, and set them all to music. He who could make the best verses, and she who had the most tuneful voice, might be sure of favour and preferment. In those days, if any one asked for bread, the reply was, 'Make me a couplet ;' and the poorest beggar, if he begged in rhyme, would often be rewarded with a piece of gold."

DREAMS.

NAY ! Let them dream their dream of perfect love ;
It is the sweetest feeling, the most fair,
This flower-like joy that blooms in the soft air
Of Youth's bright heart, with Hope's blue heaven above.

Breathe naught of disenchantment ; do not bring
Misgiving to the bliss of blended souls,
The while Life's brimming river golden rolls
Through primrose-lighted uplands of the Spring.

The blossoms of Eternity lie furled
In the dim kindling buds of dreams that keep
A fluttering pulse within Time's broken sleep ;
Dreams are not idle ; dreams have saved the world.

And therefore to the many heights afar
Our lowland eyes that yearn and dream we lift,
And to the isle-like mists that round them drift,
And to the moon and to the morning-star.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF DANCING.

THE incongruity of this title will doubtless strike many as laughable, or even absurd. To most people dancing and philosophy will probably seem as far asunder as the Poles. As a justification, I might plead that such incongruities are fashionable nowadays; that even "shilling dreadfuls" won't sell without striking titles; and indeed, if I laid claim to any wit, I might call in Isaac Barrow to be my champion, who says that wit consists "in a startling metaphor, in a plausible reconciling of contradictions, or in acute nonsense."

But my case shall rest on no such unsatisfactory basis. No! I entirely deny any incongruity or absurdity in the phrase, philosophy of dancing. On the contrary, I maintain that dancing can be philosophically treated, and that the importance of such treatment can hardly be overrated. Dr. Tanner has proved that man can exist without food. Has it been proved that he can exist without dancing? Our age has seen a philosophy of clothes, and surely men are as much dancing as clothes-wearing animals?

All may not agree with the dancing-master in 'Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme' that the destinies of the nations depend on the science of dancing; all may not acknowledge that the mistakes in the Soudan would not have occurred if the Cabinet had been chosen after the manner of the land of Lilliput; but still, when we remember how Hippoclides, the son of Tisander, lost a kingdom and a wife, by dancing a Greek *can-can* (*ἀποχήσαό γε μὴ τὸν γάμον*, as Herodotus has it); and how, on the other hand, "daughters of men," meaning ballet-girls, have won kingdoms and husbands by marrying "sons of God," to wit, peers of England; when we think

of these things, we cannot but own that in our day dancing does not receive the attention it merits.

In this, as in certain other arts (I use the word in its broadest sense), far from advancing, our age has receded. The history of an art has been likened to the history of a man—his childhood, his manhood, his dotage. The illustration has met with approval. Yet to me there seems no reason, why, on attaining its maturity, an art should begin to fade, to dwindle, to decay. In this year of grace, eighteen hundred and eighty-six, we do not look for originality, but may we not expect the excellence of a ripe maturity? After all, dotage is subjective. In the political world what may seem to some the wavering of a driveller and an idiot, are to others the natural issue of a grand old age.

In dancing, however, our retrogression is certain. In the youth of the world—I do not refer to the Glacial Period, nor yet to the Men of the Cave—in the days of the earlier civilisations of Asia, and later among the peoples of India, of China, of Japan, dancing was a religion. The Greeks, whose civilisation our own with all its boasting has hardly surpassed even materially (it is said that the inscriptions in Antioch talk of the artificial lighting of the streets, and the existence of a Press), acted very differently from us. With them dancing was a necessary part of education; to them a great dancer was a great man; Socrates thought it not unworthy of his philosophy to learn the art in his old age; and

"The wise Thessalians ever gave
The name of leader in their country's dance
To him that had their country's governance."
Yet even among the Greeks we find sure signs of a decadence; Lucian's

dialogue is a defence of dancing, not a panegyric. It is true that he proves dancing to be superior to tragedy, asserts that it is coëval with the world, that Troy was taken, that Zeus was saved, that Ariadne was ruined by a dance.

No more surely is needed to show the importance of my subject to those who, judging from the state of dancing at the present day, deem it a mere amusement. To those who object to it from moral or religious reasons, I say in the words of Lucian: "Come, tell me, my dear sir, with regard to dancing in the ball-room or at the theatre, do you censure it as one who has often seen it, or as one who knows nothing of such sights? You say you deem them disgraceful and to be spat upon. If indeed you have seen them, you have a right to your opinion (such as it is) as well as I; if not, beware, my orthodox friend, lest your censure may seem, in the eyes of worldlings, rash and unreasoning, as coming from one who prates about that of which he knows nothing." Go, my friends, go and be converted like Longfellow's Cardinal.

Let me not be thought to claim to be the first to call attention to the importance of dancing and its culpable neglect among us. Of those who have recognised this, I may mention Noverre and Davies. My sole title to originality lies in my method.

To those who are not very deeply read in the earlier English poets, the existence of a poem entitled 'Orchestra,' by Sir John Davies, one time Chief Justice of Ireland, may be unknown. His 'Nosce Te ipsum' is familiar to most students, by name at all events. His less known work, though not mentioned by Hallam, is in many ways most interesting. Written in a peculiar but easy-flowing stanza of seven lines, it illustrates by many ingenious analogies the origin and importance of dancing, establishing its existence and effects, and tracing in it all the motions of Nature.

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" For what are Breath, Speech, Echoes, Music,
Winds,
But Dancings of the Ayre in Sundry
Kinds?"

Noverre displays none of the mysticism which pervades this very ingenious and imaginative poem. His treatment is less ethereal and more practical. He argues that dancing is the one important thing in life; that to be a successful dancer, a man must be everything and know everything; that, in a word, dancing connotes everything. The converse, that to know anything or be anything one must be a dancer, or, to put it in a logical form, "Everything denotes dancing," Noverre does not seem to have recognised.

An exhaustive treatment of so wide a subject as that of dancing will not here be attempted. It will content me to briefly indicate the methods, historical and scientific, by which future seekers after truth must proceed. Those who still believe that there is some historical reality at the bottom of every myth, however altered by tradition or embellished by poetic fancy, will be interested in the different claims to the invention of dancing which appear in different mythologies. It has, by the way, been suggested to me that in this context resuscitation were a better word than invention: for dancing, some hold, was in the world before man, and was carried by our ancestors the apes to a higher elevation than it has ever reached since. The other day, while in a mythological mood hesitating between Greek nymphs and Gothic fairies, balancing the rights of Terpsichore and Fin McCoul, a lucky and providential accident—the discovery of an old book, entitled 'A treatise against Dauncing made Dialoguewise by John Northbrooke'—turned my uncertainty into a blissful feeling of relief.

The author, after duly examining all the evidence, thus sums up: "But whatsoever these saye, St. Chrysostom, an ancient father, sayth that it came first from the devill."

This was satisfactory. His Satanic Majesty (it is well in these days to be punctilious about titles) is undoubtedly older than Fin, and most probably older than Terpsichore. For to put it syllogistically :

Medusa lived before Terpsichore ;
The Devil was coëval with Medusa ;

(As Lamb says :

" The feast being ended, to dancing they went,

To a music that did produce a
Most dissonant sound, while a hellish glee
Was sung in parts by the Furies Three,
And the Devil took out *Medusa*."

. . . The Devil lived (and danced) before Terpsichore.

The only doubtful part of the syllogism is whether the first proposition is true or not. However, I have gone with the consensus of opinion.

After paying due respect to the inventor of dancing, it seemed suitable to investigate the time when and the reasons why. Here again I am indebted to a predecessor who traces "the origin and invention of this dissolute and lascivious exercise to the devils in hell, what time the Israelites, after feasting and gorging themselves with wine, fell to dancing around the molten calf in the desert."

The classification of dances is a much more difficult task. The following is purely tentative : comprehensiveness is perhaps all it can boast of.

There are three classes or kinds of dances. The first class includes all dances in which the dancers are of the same sex, and dance in bands. Mr. Northbrooke recognises this class, but seems to restrict it to those solemn exercises through which school-girls stalk—calisthenics, as the prospectuses call them nowadays. In this class, however (which my predecessor puts first, as the most innocent, I, through gallantry), we must include the chorœ parts of ballets. The second class is that of mixed dances. The dancers still dance in bands, but there is no limitation of sex. My reverend friend rather unkindly speaks of this class as

"instituted only for pleasure and wantonnesse sake." The *animus* which he displays all through his treatise might be put down to physical inability, had he not foreseen that such an accusation might arise, and written, "My age is not the cause nor my inhabilitie the reason thereof." Lord Byron's reason for writing his diatribe is only too obvious. Before proceeding to the third class, I venture to suggest that this, the second class, might be subdivided into square and round dances. By the way, Mr. Northbrooke's opinion as to the invention of round dances is rather amusing. Women, he says, invented them that "holding upon men's arms they may hop the higher." The third class consists of those dances in which one individual dances alone. In the near future I purpose to enlarge upon and exemplify these classes, by enumerating, age by age, country by country, race by race, all the dances that have been in vogue, that are still in vogue, and, by a process of induction, all the dances that are likely to be in vogue, among men. It will be a subject of infinite interest, and of infinite length. A friend of mine, indeed, a learned doctor, has left me a work in manuscript in which he labours to show that national character is to be best seen in the national dances ; that, as the Irishman (my friend was a Celt) faces his partner in the national jig, so is he straightforward in love and war. However, I must for the present leave this, the more strictly historical part of my subject, and proceed to the more purely scientific.

It seems to me that there is something subtler, something more real in dancing than these rather superficial distinctions—interesting as they may be to the ordinary observer, useful as they must be to one who is treating dancing from a merely historical stand-point. All human knowledge, we are told, is relative ; so is all dancing. In dancing, as in everything else, there is an ideal, an ideal

ever unattainable, but towards which all dancing should tend. As the ideal poet is one who writes poetry purely for poetry's sake, so the ideal dancer is one who dances purely for dancing's sake. As all motives of gain, nay, all moral and ethical tendencies, while they may magnify and popularise a poem, lessen its value as pure poetry, so all extraneous motives detract from the purity of dancing. It is true that this ideal is never reached, but some dancing approaches it much more nearly than others.

The dances included in the first class, "Pyrrhica saltatio," were in ancient times entirely religious. The gambols of the Salvationists form the only parallel among us. The secular element has invaded the other representatives of this class—calisthenics, and the choruses in the ballets; in the former the end is health, in the latter the earning of money, or something else, which ought to be equally subsidiary. Plainly it is not in this class that we are to look for dancing for dancing's sake.

There is more difficulty in dealing with the claims of the second class—that of mixed dancing. It will be said that many people waltz for waltzing's sake; waltz and dance are almost synonymous terms nowadays. If, after the manner of Socrates, I ask, as one ignorant of such things, What is meant by "for waltzing's sake"? the answer will in all probability be, "Oh, for the pleasure merely." We will not go into the question as to whether the attainment of pleasure is the ideal end of dancing. That shall be left quite open. Indeed, one must performe acknowledge that, if a person dances purely for the pleasure he gets in dancing, and is entirely regardless of the person with whom he dances, and all other externals, such a person is much nearer to the ideal than other less ascetic individuals. But is such a course of conduct practicable? That it was not usual in Mr. Northbrooke's day, some two hundred years ago, is clear. "Why

are men desirous more to daunce rather with this woman, than with that woman? And why are women so desirous rather to choose this man than that man to daunce withall?" Our spelling may have changed since then—we spell daunce without a *u*—but our ways are very much the same. For, consider how such a dancer would act in a ball-room. Recognising the unseemliness of dancing alone, he would find it necessary to get a partner. This may seem easy in his case, as it will not matter whether she be plain or pretty, young or old, silent or talkative, provided she can dance. But looking into it more closely we find that all these adjuncts do exert a certain influence, an influence that would injure ideal purity of dancing. Beauty would attract, ugliness disgust. Youth is untrained, age is over-trained. With a silent partner one must talk, with a loquacious partner one must (still worse) listen. However, supposing our dancer overcomes these distractions; supposing he chooses his partner (or should it be rather *opponent* in these days of fast waltzes and faster flirtations?) after the advice of Jenyns:

"But let not outward charms your judgment sway,
Your reason rather than your eyes obey,
And in the dance, as in the marriage noose,
Rather for merit than for beauty choose :
Be her your choice, who knows with perfect
skill,
When she should move, and when she
should be still,
Who uninstructed can perform her share
And kindly half the pleasing burden bear":

supposing that the rooms are large, and the crush mild; supposing the music is perfect, supposing the floor is smooth—a goodly lot of suppositions truly—nay, supposing he passes through a dance in reverential silence; how is our ideal friend to conduct himself in the intervals? He is expected to talk, in many instances to flirt, or—but may the gods avert it—to spoon, as the youth in Mr. Northbrooke's dialogue, evidently prompted by the *chaperons* of that time, says:

"It is well known that by dauncings and leapings very many honest marriages are brought to passe, and therefore, if for that onely, it is good and tolerable." All this cannot be done without descending from the atmosphere of almost spiritual ecstasy which ought to envelop the ideal dancer in the ball-room. Again, supper must be regarded as a wearisome necessity, not an agreeable variation. All those pleasant little interludes in the conservatories must be rigorously avoided—no ices, no champagne, no whispered nothings in a corner.

Mr. Sinnett tells us that a candidate for the Great Brotherhood can pass his probation in the full swing of London Society: he has a much easier time, then, than a dancer who aspires to ideal purity in a London ball-room.

We must turn finally to the third class in our search after the ideal. Here, at all events, we have no distraction of sex; but other agents, perhaps still more powerful, come into play—love of money and love of admiration. All dancing on the stage is done for money, and, to earn money, must excite admiration. But all work that is done for money, be it physical work or mental work, loses in imagination what it gains in condensation. Listen to the pregnant words of a wise man. Mr. Ruskin says: "It would appear therefore that those pursuits which are altogether theoretic, whose results are desirable or admirable in themselves and for their own sake, . . . ought to take rank above all pursuits which have any taint in them of subserviency to life, in so far as all such tendency is the sign of less eternal and less holy function." (Mr. Ruskin's books are attainable by every one.)

Were it not for these drawbacks, our professional dancers would be second Pelagias, as Pelagia was on one memor-

able occasion; ideal dancing would exist; we might bow down and worship Miss Kate Vaughan or Miss Adelaide Wilson. In one case, and in one only, both love of money and love of admiration are absent, and but for a touch of religion—fanaticism—what you will—we should have the ideal dancer incarnate. I mean the dancing dervish, who has been thus glorified by Carlyle: "Are not spinning-dervishes an eloquent emblem, significant of much? Hast thou noticed him, that solemn-visaged Turk, the eyes shut; dingy wool mantle circularly hiding his figure;—bell shaped; like a dingy bell set spinning on the tongue of it? By centrifugal force the dingy wool mantle heaves itself, spreads more and more, like upturned cup widening into upturned saucer: thus spins he to the praise of Allah and advantage of mankind, faster and faster, till collapse ensue, and sometimes death."

It is at a further development of this class that we must aim in our yearnings after the ideal development that cannot be far distant in these days of evolution; a development, that may be artificially hastened when our dancing-masters are paid as State officials, when there is a Minister of Dancing, when the heads of the Dancing Office are graduates of Dervish Colleges—then indeed as a nation may we aspire to the spiritual ecstasy of the dances of the Orient; then will all mockery of the divine science cease; then will men forgive Mephistopheles his many failings for the sake of his one invention; then will Herodias' daughter be a patron saint; then men will wonder that so wise a man as Cicero should have asked so foolish a question as, *Did ever man dance who was neither drunk nor mad?*

OUR NATIVE ARMY IN BENGAL.

At a time when the native army in India is about to be augmented, and when many changes are likely to be made in its organisation and constitution, it may interest Englishmen at a distance to learn something of the men from whom it is recruited.

The infantry regiments of the Bengal army are divided into eight companies, the cavalry regiments into eight troops, and these are generally made up each of a distinct class or race, and are called class companies and troops. The value of this kind of organisation will be easily understood when we remember that in the days before the Mutiny the regiments were recruited from a single country, Oudh, and were all of the Purbiah race. This made disloyalty and the possibility of open revolt very easy. Under the present organisation, in which each regiment contains three or four different races, who in some instances are more inimical to each other than they could be to us, and could never combine for united action, the possibility of the mutiny of the whole army, or indeed of the whole of any one corps, is rendered well-nigh impossible.

The races from which the Bengal native army is recruited are as follows :—Sikhs, Pathans, Panjabi Mohammedans, Hindustanis, Dogras, and Gurkhas. The regiments have different constitutions ; some have two, three, or even four companies of Sikhs, one or two of Pathans, and the other two or three Dogras, Panjabi Mohammedans, or Hindustanis. In others the Hindustani or Panjab Mohammedan element will predominate. The idea of the Government is to mix the religions and races together, not only so as to neutralise their power of disloyalty, but also to use the various fighting qualities of which the different

races are possessed so as to secure throughout the army a proper admixture of steadiness and dash ; of the steady endurance and quiet pluck of the Sikh, for instance, with the greater élan of the Pathan.

The Sikhs are a particularly fine set of men, and make excellent soldiers—the very best, I think, in the native army. In prehistoric times a race called Jats invaded India from the regions of Central Asia, and after conquering Upper India settled chiefly in the Panjab. These in process of time became Hindus by religion, and by profession principally agriculturists. Originally a fine, hardy, adventurous race, their new occupation though robbing them of some of their spirit of adventure, only added to their qualities of physical endurance and hardihood. The greater part, as I have said, became agriculturists, but many also adopted the different professions common to Hinduism, and became carriers, grain-sellers, goldsmiths, and the like ; and as in Hinduism the son almost always follows the trade of his father, in the course of time there arose in the Panjab regular castes of the different trades, each following its own special calling, and having its own well marked position in the social scale.

It was to a race thus constituted that Nanak, the great reformer and founder of the Sikh faith, came. He found the Hinduism of the Panjab desperately degenerated, both from inherent decline and from its contact with much that was debasing in Mohammedanism. Monotheism had given way to polytheism ; morality to licentiousness ; the direct worship of the Creator to the mediatorship of priests and shrines and the meretricious dominion of sacerdotalism. The preaching of Nanak was designed to meet these

errors. He taught the spiritual worship of the true and spiritual God. He forbade plurality of wives, the use of tobacco, and so forth. He enjoined as the outward marks of his creed the allowing the hair and beard to grow uncut, and the slaying of animals for food by decapitation with a sword. His disciples, the Sikhs, became very numerous, and in time were welded by the genius of Ranjeet Singh, their great military potentate, into a nation. When we conquered the Panjab these Sikhs, who had composed Ranjeet Singh's army, enlisted freely in our newly raised regiments, and now there is scarcely a regiment in the Bengal army in which there are not one or more companies of these men. They are gifted with all the qualities which go to make a good soldier. Physically they are very fine fellows, averaging in our regiments fully five feet eight inches, with a chest of thirty-six inches. They are brave and wonderfully enduring; very abstemious in their diet, seldom touching meat, and living principally on unleavened bread with a little clarified butter, and occasionally a little coarse sugar or molasses. They are splendid walkers, and when going to their homes on leave will often average thirty or forty miles a day for a week together in the hottest weather. They are very handy, as may be supposed, in the use of the spade, and can throw up entrenchments rapidly and well, and they are also very expert in the loading of baggage animals. I have seen many instances of their bravery. One I may mention. We had advanced up a hill to take a position on an exceedingly hot day in April. One of my officers succumbed to the heat, and fell fainting just as we reached the position. His orderly was carrying a bottle of soda water. This we poured over his head, and it had the effect of reviving him. We remained under fire here for some time, and then the object of the advance having been accomplished the force was withdrawn, and we were directed to retire. We did so, followed by the enemy. When we had gone

back some distance the orderly suddenly remembered that he had left the empty bottle behind, and calmly proposed that he should, at the risk of his life, go back for it.

The Pathans are a very different race in figure, in face, and in disposition. The Sikh is a long-bodied and rather lightly made man, whereas the Pathan is short and sturdy. The Sikh has a rather handsome, grave, regular set of features, while the Pathan is merrier if less good-looking. But it is in disposition that they differ most. The character of the Sikh somewhat resembles in its taciturnity and doggedness that of the Scotchman, while the Pathan has more of the lightness, the carelessness and dash of the Frenchman. The Pathan race lives almost entirely on the other side of the Indus. Some in the hills beyond the Khaibar Pass, and in the Takht-i-Suliman mountains, and some in the plains which lie between these mountains and the river. The country, the life, the bringing up of a young Pathan lad all tend to foster and develop in time the qualities which go to make up an ideal soldier, such as our native army, and especially our frontier regiments, require. His country consists for the most part of rugged bare hills with a few small valleys in which is grown scarcely enough grain to support the inhabitants. The villages are generally perched on some hill-top, and surrounded by tower-flanked walls; for pretty nearly every tribe has some *vendetta* of many years standing with its neighbours on every side, and every man, even when carrying on his rare agricultural duties, goes armed as fully as his purse will allow him. They are poorly clad and dirty in their habits; seldom if ever taking a regular bath, and keeping their clothes on them nearly as long as they will hang together. They lead an out-door life, and have all the appearance and springy walk of the mountaineer. Those who live in the hills and lead this free life make the best soldiers; but those who live in the lowlands

have not yet become too much softened by our civilisation to have lost their military qualities, though they have taken to clean clothes and ablutions.

While the Pathan, therefore, makes an excellent soldier, he requires more careful and discreet dealing with than men of any other race in quarters, and cooler leading in the field. For an advance, and especially for a pursuit, there is no better soldier; but for a stubborn resistance, for an orderly retirement, or for any operation of this kind calling for the highest qualifications of a soldier, I would infinitely rather be backed by the quieter and less dashing Sikh. Physically the Pathan is strong and wiry, averaging in our regiments about five feet seven inches with a chest of thirty-seven inches. In the hills he is superior in endurance to any other race in Upper India; but he does not stand heat well, and in the plains cannot march as well as the Sikh. Both Pathans and Sikhs are good riders, and take capital care of their horses.

The language spoken by the Sikh is Panjabi, which in some measure resembles Urdu. It is spoken with a slightly nasal accent, and as much as possible without closing the lips. It is an ugly, inelegant, not to say barbarous *patois*, and is a great trial to our young British officers when they first join a Sikh regiment.

The Pathans speak a totally different language called Pushtoo, which is remotely allied to Persian. It is a rather harsh, gutteral language; though some of the lowlanders by converting the hard *kh* into soft *sh*, and the guttural *gh* into the soft French *j*, have made their language more mellifluous. It is a bold and sturdy tongue though, and infinitely finer than the milk and water accents of Panjabi.

The Panjabi Mohammedans live, as the term implies, in the Panjab. They are the descendants of those Hindus who were converted to Islam when the Mussulman conquerors first overran Northern India. Like the Sikhs they

belong to regular hereditary trades and occupations, and each has a well-marked social position. None but those fairly high up in the social ladder are enlisted in our ranks. Physically they are a fine stalwart race, but not quite equal, I think, to the Sikh. This may be accounted for, perhaps, by the less moral tone required by their religion as practised in the Panjab than by the faith and morality of Nanak. Whatever the cause, as soldiers they are certainly not to be compared with either Sikhs or Pathans. They are a conquered race; for their conversion was the result rather of compulsion than conviction, and the race seems stamped with the helot brand. They lack force of character and independence; but they are by no means wanting in intelligence. Under our fostering care education is spreading rapidly, and this class is, perhaps, taking advantage of it more than any other in the Panjab. They are a numerous race, and offer themselves freely for enlistment. Like the Sikhs they talk Panjabi; but many of them are now sufficiently educated to speak fairly good Urdu. In diet and habits, as well as in marching and riding qualities, they resemble their fellow-countrymen the Sikhs, but there exists very little sympathy between the two classes.

Hindustanis belong to the race which before the Mutiny supplied the whole of the soldiery of the Bengal native army. Whether it is that our more peaceful government of their country and smaller demand upon their martial qualities has caused them to degenerate, I know not; but certainly from some cause a marked deterioration has taken place in the native soldiers from Oudh. Even in those regiments in which a number of them are still enlisted, the men bear no comparison with the remarkably fine, soldierly, well set-up fellows of which some of our best Pandy corps used to be composed — men who showed so well at Maharajpur and Sobraon, and vied with our British

soldiers in the storming of the Sikh positions, and in making us the victors of the land of the Five Rivers. Hindustanis are by no means favourites with the majority of British officers; for there are many things in which they compare unfavourably with the other races composing our Bengal army. The chief of these drawbacks is their caste prejudices. It is difficult to get them to mess together, and to have to carry cooking utensils for every individual man would considerably increase the amount of transport. Then they will only eat when almost denuded of clothing, and this on a campaign in a cold climate often makes it difficult to get them fed without great risk to their health. They will not drink water carried in a skin, and there is no other method of carrying water in India so convenient as in a skin. They dislike a meat diet, and this is trying to the commissariat officer, who is glad to be able to drive a portion of the necessary rations. Then they are not good soldiers in hill warfare, and they are miserable in cold and wet. An enormous percentage of a regiment of Hindustanis employed in the Kurram valley during the second Afghan war succumbed to these various causes. From what I have said it will easily be understood that with most commanding officers the Purbiah (the Eastern, as the Hindustani is called) is not popular. So much is this the case that in the Panjab Frontier Force—the portion of our army which guards our north-west frontier in India—there is only one of the eleven infantry regiments which enlists Hindustanis, and that has only one company. Blackly as I have painted them, they are not bad soldiers for fighting in the plains. They stand heat well; they are brave and steady when well led; and they are intelligent, and generally fairly well educated.

The Dogras come chiefly from the Kangra valley, and from the low hills adjacent to it. They are thus almost highlanders by race, and possess, as

regards activity and endurance, the qualities which usually characterise those whose lives are spent among mountains. They are of less stature than their neighbours in the plains, and those in our ranks probably scarcely average five feet seven inches. They are a quiet, intelligent, taciturn race, badly educated as a rule, but with lots of intellectual ability where they have had a chance of developing it. Like the Sikhs, their martial qualities lie rather in the direction of steadiness and dogged obstinacy in the face of a foe, than in dash and charge. They are Hindus by religion, and unfortunately retain many of the caste prejudices which render the Hindustanis less welcome than other races in our ranks. However, they are less prejudiced than the Purbiahs, and in most other respects are considerably their superiors. They are generally good shots and take an interest in military work, but they are quiet and sedate to a fault. They are generally rather nice looking, with regular, well-cut features, and are rather dandies in their way. They are good marchers and riders, and are a nice class to deal with.

Gurkhas are not enlisted in the regular native army; but there are five regiments composed solely of men of this race. Physically they form a great contrast to the other East Indian martial races. Though very short, averaging probably not more than five feet three inches, they have fine broad chests, and well-developed limbs: but they are desperately ugly, with features of the Mongolian type, while their small narrow eyes, flat faces, and high cheek bones unmistakably proclaim their Tartar origin. They come chiefly from the independent kingdom of Nepal, which skirts our north-eastern frontier. There is often great difficulty in obtaining recruits of this class, for the Nepalese Government is very jealous of our Government, and does not like to see so many of its men in our army. The Gurkhas make excellent soldiers,

especially for hill warfare ; they are remarkably brave, and combine dash with quiet dogged pluck. They ape the British soldier in many of their ways, and get on capitally with him on service. They are capable of higher military training, I think, than the other races ; but of course physically they are inferior, man for man, to Sikhs or Pathans. They cannot march well, and are not suited for a campaign in the plains of India during the hot season. Though they look remarkably stupid, and will sometimes take an order from beginning to end without any movement of feature or sign of intelligence to show that they have comprehended it, they are much sharper than they look, and I have been surprised when, after the most stolid reception of an order, I have asked if it was understood, to have it repeated to me word for word as I have given it. They are Hindus by religion, but less strict than the Purbiyahs, and being all together in one regiment their caste prejudices interfere less with their value as soldiers. They speak a language called Gurkhali, but learn a mongrel kind of Urdu when they enter our service. Few British officers, therefore, learn Gurkhali. The Gurkha is essentially an infantry soldier. In his own country his favourite weapon is a short curved knife (*a kukurree*), used both for warlike and domestic purposes ; this he carries attached to his waistbelt in addition to his other accoutrements, and at close quarters he can use it with terrible effect.

The races I have described are the principal ones from which our native army in Bengal is recruited, but there are a few others, such as Jats and Rohillahs, which furnish a few men.

When we come to think how different the men of these several races and classes are, in religion, in style, in features, and in manner of wearing their dress, it will easily be understood how varied must be the appearance of a native regiment, both on

parade and in quarters. On the former, of course, the uniform does much to obliterate national traits ; but even here the different methods of tying their turbans, and of wearing their whiskers and beards, serve to give a different look to the different classes. It will be easily understood also, what care and tact are needed to weld into a harmonious whole a body of men composed of races so different and with ideas and prejudices so varied, whose only tie of fellowship is that they are all mercenaries serving one common conqueror.

To help the commandant to carry this out Government has wisely intrusted him with powers of discipline and punishment greater than those possessed by an officer commanding a British regiment. He can himself try and punish summarily offences ordinarily cognizable by a district court martial, and can sentence to forty lashes or a year's imprisonment, and his sentence can be set aside on the score of illegality alone. He possesses also large powers of inflicting punishment without trial, extending to seven days confinement in solitary cells, deprivation of good conduct pay, and thirty days confinement to barracks. But crime is, fortunately, rare in the Bengal army, and this is attributable almost entirely to the absence of drunkenness. Mohammedans are, of course, prohibited by their religion from touching alcohol, and they rarely disobey on this point. Sikhs and Gurkhas drink, but very seldom to excess. During a long experience I have only known three or four cases of drunkenness when on duty. Hence there is but little insubordination ; and gambling, absence from quarters, and petty larceny are the principal crimes.

Promotion is perhaps the most difficult part of a commandant's work. He cannot, as a rule, trust much to the advice of his native officers, for their religious and tribal leanings preclude them from giving an impar-

tial opinion ; and yet, in the case of the earliest promotion, namely that from the ranks, where one's opportunities of knowing and trying individuals is generally so small, it is peculiarly difficult to select those who will probably exhibit in a higher position those qualifications of intelligence and command which are so essential in non-commissioned officers. Promotion from the ranks is made almost entirely by selection and merit ; though in cases of nearly equal merit seniority carries its own weight. In the further promotions from *naik* to sergeant, or *havildar*, seniority plays a larger part ; but above that again, from *havildar* to native officer, merit ought to be the almost only rule. Among Pathans selection is not so difficult, for they are an open, cheery race, and are constantly bringing themselves forward ; but among Sikhs and other Hindu races it is much more difficult, and I fear one often passes over a good man whom a truer knowledge of facts would have made one glad to advance.

The term of enlistment is for three years ; but fully three-fourths of the men serve on for a longer time. An increase in pay of one rupee is given at the end of the third year's service, another at the end of the sixth year's, and a third at the end of the tenth. This is termed good conduct pay, and is withheld if the conduct has not been good. At the end of fifteen years' service a man, if broken in health, gets a pension according to rank. This is one of the greatest boons in the native army and does much to make the service popular. It has also a good political bearing, for it places in almost every village throughout Upper India one or two old and influential residents whose income is dependent on the stability of our Government. The pay of a private is small to begin with, only seven rupees, or fourteen shillings, a month ; but it is just sufficient with

care to feed and keep him, and indeed most men even manage to save a little to take them to their homes when they go on leave. Furlough is the boon above all others which they value, for though most of them are married, very few bring their wives to quarters with them. Their furlough comes round about every three years, and they then get three or four months at their homes. Besides this, they can often obtain short leave if their homes are near the station where their regiment happens to be quartered.

The soldiers of the Bengal army are generally fairly healthy. They suffer from malarial fever in the autumn, and pneumonia has of late years claimed a too large percentage of victims ; but as a rule the regiments are in very good condition. Their barracks are far from comfortable ; their food consists almost entirely of cereals, their drink of water ; and though their clothing is carefully attended to, there is necessarily a large amount of exposure, especially on hill campaigning. Yet it is marvellous how sturdy and healthy the men keep, and how cheerfully they will carry on their duties if their British officers will only go the right way to work with them and set them a good example. Indeed, I know of no sphere where example exerts a greater influence. A native regiment is just what its British officers make it. The commandant especially and above all ; but under him all the British officers as well. If in quarters they are thoroughly upright, impartial, and careful of their men's needs, and on service set them the example of cheeriness and hearty co-operation, both among themselves and with their subordinates, they may demand from them almost any sacrifice, and they will not murmur ; they may ask them to follow almost anywhere, and they will not hang back.

H. C. P. RICE, *Colonel,*
Bengal Staff Corps.

THE LATE MASTER OF TRINITY.

THE interest that attaches itself to the life of a notable man is generally very complex : it entwines itself with the great events which our hero helped to bring about, with his personal relations with the other great men of his time, his view of the movements agitating society. And then there is a further interest in his private life. We desire to see the secret sources from which he drew the inspiration he carried into the outside world ; we are anxious to know whether he was most real when before the public and made his inner life subserve his outer, or whether he came away from the dust of battle and the rush of the world into the quiet of his own circle with the feeling that he was returning home. All these varying moods are an attractive study : when the mask falls away and we know that he was most dispirited when he seemed most serene, or buoyed up by a divine elation when crushed by a sorrow that seemed irreparable—the disentangling the central strand from the variegated web is a task of fascinating difficulty.

But in the life which we are here endeavouring to trace there was no such bewildering complexity. The secret history of an essentially reticent mind cannot be written ; it is at the best, sympathetic guessing. In a life where events are rare, circumstances monotonous, a character with few friends and fewer intimates, withdrawn alike from the political, the religious, the social arena, there can be little to record, unless there has been some definite line taken throughout, some marked attitude which a nature has consistently retained towards the outer world.

In the case of the late Master of Trinity we can lay our finger at once upon the characteristic which made him what he was—which gave to a

personality such an exclusive strength that when it slips from the world we feel that no replacing is possible. He stood to the action and thought of the present day in the character of a judge : like Rhadamanthus in the old fables, who dealt not with motives or tendencies but with recorded acts, and sate to give judgment upon them, his function was one of pure criticism. How much that is needed in an age where on the one hand so much is excused on the score of irresistible fatality, while on the other such an unreasonable preponderance is given to the value of action, in the face of a loss such as we have experienced is acutely felt.

It is a part of the strange irony of life that the personalities which make themselves most strenuously felt among their own generation have a way of slipping out of history. A man who is much occupied in leaving his mark on life, in stemming or colouring the whirling stream that passes him, has little time to spend in piling monuments on the banks that are the envy and wonder of the fluid tides that come and go. The wild grief that we sometimes encounter in books, more rarely in real life, that centres about the disappearance of some apparently unemphatic figure can be often thus explained : his vitality did not lend itself to visible labour, it was content to modify the temporary and fluctuating. When such an attitude is artistically maintained ; when a character most highly gifted, with a taste and delicacy of perception that overrides the captiousness of less instinctive critics, is seen to devote itself not to gathering straws but to merely watching life, an atmosphere which is at once intensely attractive and baffling begins to rise. When a sinister silence is maintained upon questions

which appear to the young and fervent to be essential to the progress of the race ; when an impenetrable contempt for fanaticism and extravagance occasionally steals out in pungent sentences ; when the outbursts of not unnatural emotions receive no quarter ; when the overbalancing of enthusiasm is not forgiven ; a deep and provoking wonder grows gradually up as to what standpoint such a critic has reached that such judgments are possible ; as to what platforms, what further heights are visible, that the plain seems so low and despicable. Of all fascinations there is none like the fascination of contempt ; and when this is seen justified by a sure touch, a genuine grasp of ideas, a most piercing intellect, and seen moreover steadfast in a place of which the very atmosphere is that of generous and ardent spirits, the wonder becomes almost intolerable.

There is a great and common misapprehension which accepts no criticism as valid except what proceeds from a basis of superior capacity. The ordinary man requires the critic to be a better man than the performer whom he dissects, to be able to beat his victim on his own ground. But this is a deep-seated error. The creative power often confers no clearness of vision on its possessor ; the best critics are seldom originative men. The critic is, in fact, meant to clear the air for ordinary people about great work ; to ascertain the best points of view, and to sting to death the crawling nerveless creatures who are just capable of obscuring by the closeness of their imitative powers the beauty of their great exemplar.

To this task the late Master of Trinity brought an instinctive taste of the first order. He brought a mind so delicate as to be only saved from becoming hypercritical by a certain robustness and virility of life, a literary discrimination which led the men to whom he lectured to scribble down his very epithets on the margins of their note-books, and which carried

into all he wrote a flavour which few writers have leisure to bestow. And yet he was no pedant.

But this critical faculty had its negative side ; it grew at the expense of other sides of his intellect. No faculty can be sustained in such perfection except by a loss of balance. And there is something like a sense of failure that crosses us when we look over the list of works by which he will soon be known : an edition of a dialogue or two of Plato's—a few reviews, a sermon or two, occasional contributions to a classical journal—and that is all.

There is a dissatisfaction attending the production of all work even in the most creative minds ; but when there is added to this a keenly fastidious taste, working in a region where there can hardly be a constant glow of enthusiasm to propel a student through his exertions, it will be seen that the natural difficulty must have been great. In his later years, moreover, he had to contend with constant ill-health—and ill-health engendering a hypochondriacal tendency, which is of all physical evils the hardest for a student to struggle against. A physical uneasiness which seems to require the perpetual distraction of the mind is fatal to its attaining a firm standpoint for laborious origination. And so his intellect turned aside into the easier path of wide and various literary diversion, the impulse, the imperious conscience, so to speak, of the writer to produce, growing fainter and fainter.

A mind of that kind, with its interest in philosophy, its unique power of entering into the heart of subtle ideas and refined phrases, joined with its keen view of the modern spirit, might have done a great work of reconciliation. He is even now the originator of the present Cambridge Platonic school ; but he is more the suggester and inspirer of the movement than its leader—or even to any great extent its pioneer. He was neither the hard progressive thinker

nor the revolutionary scholar ; he was merely one of those who by his acute touch, by the keen medium through which he regarded things, made those things seem worth doing.

But to the outer world he was perhaps best known as a conversationalist ; he had the kind of reputation upon which stories are fathered. Men who knew the background from which Dr. Thompson's utterances proceeded, who knew the inimitable air, the droop of the eyelids, the inscrutable coldness of the eyes and lips, the poise of the head, were ready to give a fictitious value to sayings that had the sanction of his name. To couple his name, falsely or truly, with an epigram gave it an indefinable prestige ; his personality thrown into the scale made a sarcasm that might have passed unnoticed into a crushing hit.

Those of his sayings that survive (and there are a considerable number of a first-rate order) will appeal, it must be confessed, chiefly to those whose humour is of the true derisive order. When he said, for instance, on hearing that the numbers of a rival college were diminishing, that he had heard that emigration was increasing among the lower classes, or that he had never realised what was the full force of the expression in the bidding prayer, "the inferior clergy," till he saw the minor canons of a northern cathedral—the fancy, though irresistibly tickled by the collocation, will on reflection revolt against the cruelty of the expressions. And yet those who knew him best concur in saying that he was an intrinsically kind man ; so promptly generous indeed that, in the days when he was a college tutor, undergraduates in trouble went naturally to him for help and advice—a most weighty proof to those who know the undergraduate world and its reticence. His tone, in fact, especially in later days, was always affectionate, even tender when speaking of the lads who came under him. "The boys" (his invariable phrase) "are so good-natured," he said

lately to an old friend, who had remarked with some distress upon the riotous behaviour of the undergraduates at a College Feast : "It is so easy to keep them within bounds ; they only require a few words to be said to them—in an epigrammatic way."

The explanation is that these sayings were uttered solely with reference to the amusement of those who heard them, with no ulterior idea : he had no wish that the venom of these stings should circulate and rankle—least of all that they should penetrate to those who formed the subjects of them. But he could not resist an epigram ; and when on accompanying a popular preacher who was to preach at St. Mary's he found himself so hampered by the crowd at the door as to be almost unable to force an entrance—his suave utterance, "Make way, gentlemen, or some of us will be disappointed", was genuinely made, because the thought had occurred to him, and he was convinced it would amuse the throng, and with no sort of wish to harrow the feelings or dash the innocent pride of the gentleman with him.

It was only a few years ago that the writer of these lines heard him say in a meditative manner at the Lodge at Trinity, speaking of an offensive speech that had been made the evening before at a College dinner which every one felt had marred the flow of the evening, "He reminded me of his father"; whereupon—his sentences having somewhat of an oracular effect about them, and those present having instinctively turned in his direction, thinking that some interesting reminiscence had been aroused—he continued "he succeeded in being at once dull and flippant", and then, after a pause, "no uncommon combination." This last is a specially characteristic utterance—a strong personal judgment relieved by a general application—by, if we may use the word, a "back-hander" to humanity. This was what he delighted in

doing. No one, again, had a greater power of freezing enthusiasm dead, when expressed with what he considered unnecessary vehemence. A gentleman, now a professor at Cambridge, has told me that in his undergraduate days he was once spending the evening in Dr. Thompson's rooms, and the conversation turned on the respective merits of some well-known Madonnas. This gentleman expressed himself with youthful positiveness in favour of Raffaele's *Madonna della Seggiola* as compared with Lionardo's *Vierge aux Rochers*, engravings of which were hanging side by side on the wall, adding, "There can be no reasonable doubt on the subject." Thompson crossed the room and looked at first one and then the other in silence: then in his iciest manner, said, "When you are older, you will think differently."

But there was one position in which these strokes were undeniably unamiable: they could be forgiven in private—from a man "off duty"—but when the same spirit was transferred into his official relations the problem became a more serious one. Men who had seen him pass to and fro from his rooms to lecture, in a rustling silk gown of the stiffest tutorial black, with the "gyp" behind him carrying his basket of books, exchanging neither word nor smile with any that he passed, could not believe that the impenetrable superb exterior was not the true expression of a mind donnish to the core. "Have you forgotten my rusty sword?" muttered Bentley to some contumacious fellow of Trinity, threatening to revive some ancient regulation long in abeyance. The late Master's sword was neither rusty, nor were mankind ever suffered to forget it. When upon the discussion of some trivial point he said stiffly of an inoffensive Fellow who had previously professed ignorance of the question, "I am surprised that Mr. —— is not acquainted with the fact: it is so very unimportant"; and when at a

lecture, after closing a list of books that he recommended, he ended by saying of one of the works of his predecessor in the mastership, that "he had looked through it and corrected some of the grosser blunders,"—we cannot help feeling that such things, though amazingly ingenious in themselves, had better not have been uttered if they were (as they actually were) capable of personal application: we cannot help feeling that the moral reputation of the man who uttered them has instinctively been lowered in our estimation: whether intentionally or not, they are needlessly bitter. If humour is the saline element, the wholesome preservative of the tone of life, we sometimes meet it concentrated when its bitterness seems its only characteristic.

The mastership of Trinity is a unique position; with its traditions it confers a kind of intellectual peerage upon its occupant. It is the only great position at Cambridge which is of Crown appointment and not elective. At another college the man who means to end by being master has to gain the confidence of his colleagues, to conciliate them. It is generally conferred upon the man who has best deserved it by worth and weight, and cheerful labour spent in furthering the college interests; but at Trinity no such exertions are needed. College opinion is, of course, considered; but a man has far more need to impress the outer world. If, on attaining this position, a man isolates himself from his fellow-workers, makes no efforts for popularity, arrogates to himself a critical position, no remarks are possible, so common elsewhere, of the type of "kicking away the ladder by which the ascent was made." It is a great testimony to Dr. Thompson's weight and impressiveness, that among the remarks that were and have been made as to his manner of administering the position, it has never been hinted that he was unworthy to succeed that intellectual Titan, Whewell. Dr. Thompson had no encyclopedic

knowledge to show ; he had no vast capacities of dealing with general subjects ; he had not a remarkably comprehensive mind. But he was a man of whom it was impossible to think meanly ; he extorted admiration even where he did not win sympathy. His presence among Heads of Houses, in the Senate House, at Boards and Syndicates, was instinctively felt to confer an honour upon his associates ; he had, in fact, something of the kingly attributes about him. He moved naturally in an atmosphere of deference, and not only the deference conceded to a man whose speech is feared ; his manner had something to do with it, no doubt. It was majestic ; there is no other word.

It is to be feared that the impression he will leave will be that of a man whose mind was deliberatively depreciative ; and it cannot be denied that his best things were in the depreciative manner. But they were only occasional flashes in much conversation of the subtle deft type that perpetually flowed from him. Of course such a stream cannot be remembered if it is not "photographed" at the time. It only exists in beautiful impressions left on the hearer's mind. Friends who went to see him for a few minutes' chat on business stayed an hour beguiled by the enchantment. It is said of him, that "much of the enjoyment of talking to him was that the expectation of conversational surprises was so frequently gratified." Such a delicate turn as occurs in the prefatory remarks to his edition of the 'Phædrus' will illustrate this. He says, that in sorting "a heap of Neoplatonic rubbish, many remarks emerge that are learned, even sensible ;" the inversion of the two epithets—the suspicion hinted that the ground covered by the first is by no means conterminous with the ground of the second, is the kind of turn he delighted to give.

At no period of his life was he probably a very arduous worker, though always fond of serious and sustained reading ; he used to lament the change

of the dinner hour—which in the old barbarian days was at such a time as four—as depriving him of his long peaceful evenings, when he did all the work he ever did ; and, as has been already said, he was the victim for many years of a very hypochondriacal temperament, which may account for many things—for his never applying himself to the production of a great work—for the acid turn of his wit. He was a great smoker at one time ; and this is said to have affected him injuriously.

The magnificence of his face and figure will haunt those who knew them well. The complexion like parchment ; the large ear ; the short snow-white hair in such strange contrast to the coal-black mobile eyebrows, with which, as is recorded of Dr. Keate, he seemed almost able to point at anything ; then the critical wrinkles of the brow ; the droop of the eyelid, slowly raised as he turned to you, as though to give your faltering remarks his more particular attention ; the eye so keen formerly, in latter days so curiously dull and obscured ; the depressed curve of the lip drawn away at the corners—it was a face which it will be absolutely impossible to forget, which it was impossible not to take delight in watching ; it was a face from which you could not help expecting something.

It is a curious fact, to which all who were admitted to his friendship concur in bearing testimony, that his religious life was throughout sincere and simple and strong ; an old pupil of his speaks of the surprise he felt on taking up a Manual of Family Devotions from a bookseller's counter, to find that it was the work of the Master. In truth, he was so unsparing of his contempt for the extremes of every school, Puseyites and Evangelicals alike, that he was often supposed to have no religion at all, yet in the early days of his Mastership he wrote in the Saturday Review a grave and feeling remonstrance against the prevailing idea that Fellows of Colleges

who took Orders, did so insincerely to retain their dividends. He was always markedly reverent in talk; and the simple piety of his closing hours is singularly touching.

There is a strange pathos in his criticism when he was first shown the magnificent but somewhat appalling picture by Mr. Herkomer, taken when he was not far from the end. "Do I really look as though I held the world so cheap?" he said. It was like a kind of recantation, a kind of protest against the opinion which held him to be so innately an unkindly man; a kind of claim to be reckoned as one of the human race whom he was popularly supposed to despise. And an intimate friend has related to the writer a very affecting incident which shows the same deprecating attitude of mind. He was sitting with the Master, who had inquired whether he had lately heard any news of a common friend. "Yes," replied the

other, "he's a very unhappy man: he's eaten up with destructive criticism: he began by an intense admiration of Niebuhr's method, and he has allowed it to invade the whole of his own life." The Master was standing with his hand on the handle of the door, but he turned quickly at this, and it was obvious that his eyes were full of tears. "Ah," he said, "criticism is a great thing, a very great thing—but it's not everything."

A great impressive figure is gone from us. We cannot, without a pang, see our characteristic types pass and disappear from the gallery of life. The late Master of Trinity was, perhaps, a character that appealed more to the older, to the humorous, than to the young, the generous, the ardent. But we shall terribly misunderstand him if we do not see that a heart beat beneath the cynical mask, that the figure inside the sardonic shrine was of pure gold.